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The Nebraska Bird Review

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WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2013 to February 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This was a low-key winter season in terms of reportable phenomena of any significance, although three species provided food for thought: high numbers of Rough-legged Hawks, the possibility of breeding Northern Saw-whet Owls in the cedar canyons of Lincoln Co, and the possible impending demise of Black-billed Magpie over most of the state. Also noteworthy is the continuing increase in mid-winter reports of a wide range of species that previously have accounted for very few such records. Notable in this respect are waterfowl, mimids, non-oriole icterids, and sparrows; a Say's Phoebe in December was the most surprising record in this group. "Winter finches" were in very low numbers.

Real rarities were lacking; the best in this category were Eurasian Wigeon, Great Black-backed Gull, and Steller's Jay.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Nebraska City
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBC: Christmas Bird Count
Cem: Cemetery
CL: Carter L, Omaha
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar/Knox Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res., Republican City
HL: Holmes L, Lincoln
imm: immature
juv: juvenile
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
m. ob.: many observers
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
Res: Reservoir
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park

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CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
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DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk
EA: Edward Allen, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
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GD: Garrett Day, Omaha
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
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SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SQ: Sally Quinn, Nebraska City
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: More than usual were reported through the winter, starting with a new count high of 20 on the North Platte CBC on 28 Dec (fide TJW); this species is uncommon to rare westward. One was at CL in Jan, joined by a second 7 Feb (ARy, JR, RSt), 8 were at HCR 14 Jan (G&WH), and 12 were in Cass Co 13 Jan (RSt). Migrants generally arrive in mid-Feb.

Snow Goose: A single overwintered at CL (JR, LE), and was joined by 5 more 7 Feb (JR). Unusually high numbers for winter were reported westward: 12,620 were on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) with 15 still there 15 Jan (SM), and a "flock" was in Deuel Co 20 Jan (KMD). "Thousands" appeared in Nemaha Co 22 Feb (SQ).

Ross's Goose: Along with the large number of Snows on the LM CBC 28 Dec, 701 Ross's were counted also (fide SJD), by far the highest count that late. This species is reported more often in mid-winter as its numbers increase and Snow Geese are more numerous in mid-winter. Two other reports were of westerly singles: one at Scottsbluff SL 3 Jan (SMa) and one in Deuel Co 20 Jan (KMD). A Snow x Ross's hybrid was at CL 28 Jan-12 Feb (JR).

Cackling Goose: Generally occurring with wintering Canada Geese, Cackler numbers are lowest in Jan. However, 40 were still at CL 11 Jan (JR), dwindling to 1 by 23 Jan (LE, JR), but increasing to 15 by 7 Feb (JR). Other Jan reports were of 20 stragglers in Lancaster Co 3 Jan (LE) and 8 in western Douglas Co 11 Jan (JR).

Canada Goose: A total of 97,928 was reported on state CBCs, 28,426 of these at Scottsbluff (fide AK).

Mute Swan: The only report was of 2 at Boys Town L, Douglas Co, 12 Jan, likely captives (NR).

Trumpeter Swan: This species is becoming ubiquitous in winter. Best CBC tallies were the 60 on the Calamus-Loup CBC 19 Dec (fide DH) after 105 were

there 12 Dec (DH), and 53 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD). These are expected wintering locations, but a new one is CL, where as many as 30 were present through the winter (JR, m. ob.). Among the CL flock was one with an orange patagial tag #387, originating from a Minnesota program (JR); this bird was first noted in western Douglas Co 5 Dec (JR). One with a red collar, from the Iowa program, was with a flock of 22 on Beach Rd, Cass Co, 20 Jan (L&BP). Apparently this flock was over-nighting there (CNK), and were likely different birds from those at Carter L; no red collars were reported from Carter L. Oddly, a veteran observer's first record of Trumpeter Swan in Knox Co was one on the Missouri River 17 Jan (MB).

Tundra Swan: This species is less than annual in mid-winter, and so the 3 reports were unexpected. A single ad wintered in the North Platte area, where it was reported from several locations 20 Dec-15 Feb (TJW, LE, VC photo), and a "dusky juv" wintered with the Trumpeters at CL 3 Jan-26 Feb (JT, m. ob.). The third report was of 2 at LO 4-12 Jan (SMa, MW), a regular wintering place for Trumpeters.

Mandarin Duck: Amazingly, a male returned to Pier Park, Grand Island, 12 Jan (SM) for the third straight winter. Its provenance is unknown.

Wood Duck: Although generally rare in mid-winter, especially westward, this species winters almost anywhere there is open water. One such location is Berggren Pond, Scotts Bluff Co; 3 were there 11 Jan (KD). Similarly, Pier Park in Grand Island attracts wintering birds; 18 were there 12 Jan (SM).

Gadwall: A few occur in mid-winter given open water, although more than usual were reported this winter following a similar showing during winter 2012-2013; 11 were at Berggren Pond, Scotts Bluff Co, 11 Jan (KD), up to 9 were on Salt Creek, Lincoln, through the period (LE, JK), 2 were in Jefferson Co 9-11 Jan (RT), and 2 were at LO 15 Jan (SM). A hybrid with Mallard, known as "Brewer's Duck", was at LM 16 Feb (JGJ); this is the 3rd report for the state.

Eurasian Wigeon: The only report of this rare spring migrant was of a pair at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, 21 Feb (EB, details).

American Wigeon: This species is found in mid-winter only rarely; mid-winter sightings (generally mid-Jan through mid-Feb) of diving ducks anywhere in the state are, of course, dependent on the presence of open water. Last American Wigeons reported in fall were 1-3 in Cass Co 20-23 Jan (RSt, L&BP) and 3 at CL 23 Jan (JR), and first reported in spring were the 21 in Lincoln Co 17 Feb (TJW).

American Black Duck: A single male was at CL 9 Jan-23 Feb (JR, m. ob.); this species occurs most winters generally as single birds with larger Mallard flocks in the Missouri River Valley. Hybridization occurs with Mallard; one observer (JR) detected some "greenish on crowns" of a few female-type Mallards that may indicate mixing of genes.

Mallard: More than one third of the state CBC total of 64,916 was the 23,700 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD). Oddly, 2 major rafts of Mallards on the Missouri River included 5200 floating past Nebraska City 15 Jan (LF) and an amazing 11,000 passing Sarpy Co 14 Feb (CNK).

Northern Shoveler: Up to 15 wintered at CL (JR, m. ob.), far fewer than in the past two winters. Elsewhere, one was in Lincoln Co 8 Jan (TJW) and another

appeared at Pier Park, Grand Island, 12 Jan (SM). Up to 5 were on Salt Creek, Lincoln, 3-12 Feb (LE).

Northern Pintail: Reports were routine for this regular winter visitor, usually males in small numbers with Mallard flocks.

Green-winged Teal: Reports were routine for this regular low-density winter visitor.

Canvasback: Noteworthy was one near North Platte 17 Jan (TJW), where mid-winter sightings are few.

Redhead: As with Canvasback, a rare mid-winter report was of 2 near North Platte 17 Jan (TJW).

Ring-necked Duck: As many as 35 overwintered at CL (JR) and as many as 100+ were in the North Platte area 17 Jan (TJW). There are regular reports through mid-Jan and beginning again early Feb, so this species is virtually a regular winter species. Other than 1-2 on Salt Creek, Lincoln, 3-17 Feb (LE, RE), there were no reports in the second half of Jan except for the wintering birds at CL.

Greater Scaup: Mid-winter reports are few, most from LM, where a few winter most years; one was there 15 Jan (SM). Rare elsewhere at that time, one in Madison Co 18 Jan (MB, DH) was a good find.

Lesser Scaup: Like Ring-necked Duck, this species occurs with some regularity in fall into mid-Jan; last reported this winter were 2 at LM 15 Jan (SM), where wintering occurs most years. There are few records in mid-winter (mid-Jan through mid-Feb); first spring arrivals reported were 15 at Merritt Res, Cherry Co 16 Feb (WF).

Surf Scoter: Rather late were 2 at LO 20 Dec (PD); there are only 2 later dates, latest 20 Jan.

Black Scoter: None were reported; last dates are in mid-Dec.

Long-tailed Duck: The reports were all from LO, where 8, 3 fewer than the record count, were found 20 Dec (PD); 2 fems remained there 28 Dec-15 Jan (SJD, SM, m. ob.).

Bufflehead: One in Antelope Co 19 Jan (WF) was a rare mid-winter record away from favored winter sites; one of those sites is LO, where 180 were still present 29 Dec (fide SJD).

Common Goldeneye: Reports were routine for this common winter visitor.

Barrow's Goldeneye: A fem at the Scottsbluff SL 24 Dec-21 Jan (fide AK, RMa, KD) was the only report; this species is a regular winter visitor, usually as single birds, to the western North Platte River Valley and LO.

Hooded Merganser: Up to 11, most males, wintered at CL (JR, CNK); a rare occurrence. A male was in Madison Co 10 Jan (JMa), rather late. Most depart by 5 Jan.

Common Merganser: The 4300 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) was impressive, although high fall/winter counts are above 36,000.

Red-breasted Merganser: A few overwinter each year at LM with the Common Merganser flock; one was found 15 Jan (SM). Unexpected away from LM in mid-winter was a male near North Platte 8-17 Jan (TJW).

Ruddy Duck: Only casual in winter, with latest dates in early Jan, last reported was one on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD).

Northern Bobwhite: This species occurs in or near the Platte River Valley west to Colorado; singles were found in Custer Co 13 Feb (WF) and Lincoln Co 31

Dec (TJW). A good count for the northeast was the 25 on the Norfolk CBC 14 Dec (fide DH), and sightings of up to 12 on 3 occasions, possibly the same group, in Dodge Co during the period were considered unusual there (D&JP).

Chukar: Five were photographed along Wrights Gap Road, Banner Co, 15 Feb (MS); these are probably released game birds, although a major release of 700 birds was made in 1968 in southern Scotts Bluff Co, with consistent reports until 1977.

Gray Partridge: None of this uncommon and local northeast Nebraska resident were reported. The population appears to be currently at cyclical low.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine for this locally common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine for this fairly common northern and western resident.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: The 8-10 at a booming ground in a Thomas Co hayfield 15 Feb (TJW) were anxious to get things going for the spring. Booming generally begins around this time.

Wild Turkey: Turkeys are now ubiquitous in Nebraska, often in large numbers; 300+ in 3 groups were in northern Knox Co 12 Jan (MB).

Common Loon: The only report was of a tardy bird on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD). There are only about 6 later dates, including an over-wintering bird.

Pied-billed Grebe: Latest was one on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD), and the only other report was of one on the Lincoln CBC 14 Dec (LE). This species has overwintered at LM, and only once elsewhere, at CL 2012-2013.

Horned Grebe: None of this fairly common statewide fall migrant were reported; last dates are in mid-Dec.

Red-necked Grebe: There were 2 reports of single birds at LM 20 Dec (PD) and 28 Dec on the CBC (fide SJD); these were likely the same bird. In recent years this species has been found each year at LM in late Dec.

Eared Grebe: None of this common statewide fall migrant were reported; last dates are in early Dec.

Western Grebe: The only report was of the 34 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD). This is a low number for LM, where 100-200 usually linger into early Jan and overwintering of very low numbers of birds has occurred.

Clark's Grebe: One was on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD); recent years have seen a few linger late in fall with the many Western Grebes there. Overwintering has occurred twice there.

Double-crested Cormorant: Although overwintering has occurred (less often than American White Pelican) at Sutherland Res, 2-5 cormorants there 16-17 Feb (JGJ, TJW) may as likely have been early spring migrants.

American White Pelican: This species winters at Sutherland Res most years; 4 were there 16-17 Feb (JGJ, TJW).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine for this uncommon primarily western winter visitor.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: An imm on Salt Creek, Lincoln, 11 Jan (LE) was the second record for Jan and latest by 9 days. It may have been wintering, but there were no other reports at that location.

Bald Eagle: Apparently the highest single-location Jan count on record was the 250 at HCR 19 Jan (KS). Numbers usually start to increase in mid-Feb.

Northern Harrier: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine for this fairly common resident and winter visitor.

Northern Goshawk: None were reported of this rare but regular statewide winter visitor.

Red-shouldered Hawk: One in Sarpy Co 19 Dec (EB) was the only one reported; this species is a rare but regular winter visitor (resident?) in the east.

Red-tailed Hawk: The 6 "Harlan's" Hawks found among 33 Easterns on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec was a count high there (TJW).

Ferruginous Hawk: Reports were routine for this uncommon western resident and rare central winter visitor.

Rough-legged Hawk: Numbers were high this winter; several CBCs and field observers reported more Rough-legged Hawks than Red-tailed Hawks as well as a few count all-time highs for the species. In north-central Nebraska 28 Dec, there were 37 Rough-legged Hawks counted compared with only 15 Red-tailed Hawks (MB), and 37 were counted between York and Ogallala 1 Jan (RMa). There is only one higher count, that of 53 in the Panhandle 10 Feb 2001. The total for all CBCs statewide was a surprising 184 (fide D&JP). There appeared to be some movement out of some areas in mid-Jan, where numbers dropped noticeably (TJW, JT).

Golden Eagle: Easternmost, where a few are expected each year, usually imms, singles were in Madison Co 1 Jan (DH) and Knox Co 2 Feb (MB).

American Coot: This species attempts to over-winter when open water is available; the 1504 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) had declined to 75 by 16 Feb (JGJ). The only others reported in mid-winter were up to 9 wintering on CL (JR, RSt, LE) and one near North Platte 17 Jan (TJW).

Sandhill Crane: The first spring migrants for this early arriver were 2+ over North Platte 13 Feb (TJW, JGe). First sightings are usually in late Jan.

Killdeer: As with American Coot, a few Killdeer attempt to overwinter around margins of open water, mostly in the North Platte River Valley. A total of 19 were reported at 4 CBC locations, including 13 at LM (fide SJD) and 2 away from the North Platte River Valley at Lincoln (fide LRB); the rest were found from North Platte westward. Most, if not all, of these birds overwintered (TJW, m. ob.).

Wilson's Snipe: This species, like Killdeer, winters regularly in the North Platte River Valley; a surprising number for the date, however, was the 25+ at Hiatt Memorial Wetland, North Platte, 8 Jan (TJW).

Franklin's Gull: This species occurs less than annually in Dec, and so the 3 reports were unusual: 3 were at PL 1 Dec (RSt), and singles were in Lancaster Co 6 Dec (JGr) and on the Calamus-Loup CBC 19 Dec, a first for that count (fide DH). The latter 2 reports are only the 25th and 26th in the period 6 Dec-15 Feb.

Mew Gull: One at LM 27-29 Dec (SJD, LE) was only the 19th fall record for the state. All but 5 of these fall records are from LM and GPD.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

California Gull: The usual few late fall lingerers were at LM: 1-4 of various ages were reported 29 Dec-12 Jan (SJD, SMa, RMa, MW). Over-wintering of small numbers occurs at LM most years. Not unexpected was one at L Maloney, Lincoln Co, 2-3 Dec (TJW), but one at Alma 1 Dec (G&WH) was easterly.

Herring Gull: Numbers are fewest in Jan; the only report at that time was of one at BOL 22 Jan (LE).

Thayer's Gull: The fewer reports than usual involved possibly only 3 individuals: a juv was at LM 20 Dec (PD), 2 were counted on the LM CBC 28 Dec (no ages given; fide SJD), an ad and a juv were at LM 16 Feb (JGJ), and a juv was at GPD 6 Dec (PD).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: This species is a spring and fall migrant; only the 7th record for 4 Feb-11 Jan was of a first winter-plumaged bird which lingered at LM through at least 15 Jan (SM, m. ob.). Two (first- and third-winter plumages) were at LM 20 Dec (PD), and 2-3 had arrived at LM by 16 Feb (JGJ). The only other report was of an ad at GPD 6 Dec (PD).

Glaucous Gull: Reports were of 1-3 at LM during the period, including one each of first, second, and third-winter birds (SMa, JGJ, PD, m. ob.), likely the same juv at PL and BOL continuing from fall through 6 Dec (EA, PD, LE), and one at North Platte SL 31 Dec (TJW).

Great Black-backed Gull: An ad photographed at GPD 6 Dec (PD) was only the 15th fall record for the state.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine for this locally abundant statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Numbers continue to increase, especially in the west; of 1291 reported on CBCs this year, 456 were at Scottsbluff, a new count high (fide AK). Of interest was a group of 22 drinking at open water in Salt Creek, Lincoln, 22 Jan, the first large group seen by the observer in the inner city (LE).

White-winged Dove: 1-2 were at a Fremont feeder 1-4 Dec (CS), only the 13th report for the period 11 Oct-19 Mar.

Mourning Dove: CBCs indicated a fairly typical late fall distribution across the state; of 255 Mourning Doves reported, all were in the east except for the 6 on the LM CBC (fide SJD). An excellent one-location count for the date was the 200 feeding on spilled grain at a Sarpy Co elevator 2 Jan (ARy). One at Arnold 17 Dec (LE) was tardy at that northerly location.

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Great Horned Owl: A pair made an early start on incubation at Fairmont 15 Feb (JRi); generally incubation begins around mid-Feb, but there are two reports of incubation in late Jan in recent years from Lincoln Co (TJW).

Snowy Owl: Possibly 6 were reported, a typical non-invasion year tally; singles were photographed in Johnson Co 21 Dec (fide JGJ), Jefferson Co 25 Jan (fide JGJ), at Eppley Airfield, Omaha, 27-28 Feb (GD, fide JT), and in Dodge Co 6 Feb (KeS fide GR). One was in Keith Co 27 Dec (SJD), and another in Keith Co 28 Jan was unconfirmed (fide TJW).

Barred Owl: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern, rare central, resident.

Long-eared Owl: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Short-eared Owl: Seven were reported, a typical winter number, 6 in the east (m. ob.) and one on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Following the amazing survey estimate of some 48 breeding pairs in western conifer areas (Bly et al. 2008), interest in this species in Nebraska has increased. The species is silent during migration (http://www.owlpages.com), which suggests that calling birds are territorial and likely to breed where heard. Thus information from the cedar canyons in Lincoln Co is of interest; calling is heard there most years from late Jan-early Mar (LDe), and there are additional records of calling birds into May (TJW). It is possible that wintering birds may begin calling before migrating, but I found no information regarding this.

Belted Kingfisher: Winter numbers vary with amount of still, open water, but the 4 on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec was a count high there (fide TJW). Another was northerly for the date in Antelope Co 19 Jan (WM).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Numbers were still high in late fall in the southeast, with 160 on the Omaha CBC 21 Dec (fide BG), 45 at ICSP 19 Dec (LF, SQ) and 12-24 there 17-19 Feb (LF, SQ, RSt), and a count high of 38 (old high 8) at DeSoto NWR CBC 15 Dec (fide JT). Thus northerly stragglers were to be expected, such as the 2 on the Beaver Valley CBC 26 Dec (WM), and one at Valentine 4 Jan (MB).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Reports were routine for this common eastern and central resident, rare in the west

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: One on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec (fide TJW) was westerly, and another (or the same) lingered in Lincoln Co 1 Jan (JP). An ad male at a LM feeder 1-8 Feb (J&GB) was only the 2nd record for Feb away from the southeast. There were several mid-winter records from the southeast, where a few birds winter most years.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: A fem of the Rocky Mountain subspecies continued in a Scotts Bluff Co yard through the winter (KD).

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine for this fairly common winter visitor.

Pileated Woodpecker: The DeSoto NWR CBC 15 Dec reported 5; the first count record was of 2 in 2012 (fide JT). Omaha CBC reported 4 on 21 Dec (fide BG); these two counts indicate the continuing consolidation of this species in forests in the southeast, although extent of habitat may soon become a limiting factor.

American Kestrel: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Merlin: Generally only a migrant through Nebraska, the earliest returning *Falco columbarius columbarius* reported was in Knox Co 28 Feb (MB); spring dates for this subspecies are 16 Feb-2 May. The expected wintering subspecies, *F. c. richardsoni*, was represented by one in Dakota Co 8 Dec (BFH).

Gyrfalcon: While there were no reports of this rare winter visitor, a falconer reported loss of a Peregrine x Gyrfalcon hybrid near Atkinson (fide JGJ).

Such birds are occasionally reported in the wild, and can present identification problems.

Peregrine Falcon: Mid-winter reports have become routine in recent years, almost all presumably of the resident ads in and near Lincoln and Omaha.

Prairie Falcon: Winter sightings are fewest in the southeast, although this winter several were reported there: singles were in York Co 4 Jan (SM), Sarpy Co 25 Jan (LE), Nuckolls Co 2 Feb (LR, RH), Thayer Co 10 Feb (DE), and Dodge Co 19 Feb (GR).

Say's Phoebe: A major surprise was a single near LM 27 Dec (fide SJD); this is over 2 months later than the previous latest date.

Loggerhead Shrike: Neither of the 2 northerly reports received were accompanied by details; this is a rare bird away from the southeast in mid-winter.

Northern Shrike: This species is least common in the southeast and so the 6 on the DeSoto NWR CBC 15 Dec (fide JT) were noteworthy.

Pinyon Jay: Only 1 and 4 were reported on the CBCs at Harrison 22 Dec and Crawford 21 Dec respectively (fide B&DW), but 30 were at a regular feeding site near Dalton 3 Jan (RMa). Flocks are rather conspicuous in most winters.

Steller's Jay: Following last winter's incursion of 7-8 birds into Scotts Bluff Co, a repeat was noted this year, as up to 7 were found in fall, at least 3 wintered, and the last one reported was seen 13 Mar (AK, RMa, SMa). There are still fewer than 40 records for this species in Nebraska.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine for this winter visitor, most common eastward.

Black-billed Magpie: The range of this species has shrunk quite quickly in the last few years, with the stronghold now the North Platte River Valley from LM westward and in the Pine Ridge, with only isolated colonies elsewhere. Only 32 were reported on CBCs, all in the west: 16 at LM 28 Dec (fide SJD), 10 at Scottsbluff 14 Dec (fide AK), 5 at Crawford 21 Dec (fide B&DW) and one at Harrison 22 Dec (fide B&DW). Three in Deuel Co 16 Feb were the only ones seen on a 3-day western Nebraska trip 15-17 Dec (JGJ). The only easterly report was from the "usual place" near Crofton, where 1-2 were seen 13-15 Dec (RD, CA, MB). One was between Oconto and Broken Bow in Custer Co 22 Feb (LE) and 6 were at Scotts Bluff NM 27 Dec (LE).

American Crow: Some 85% of all crows reported on CBCs were at Calamus-Loup 19 Dec, where 5000 were estimated (fide DH). The 1500 in a flock near Maxwell was "the largest concentration I have ever seen" (LE), but the LM CBC reported only one (fide SJD)!

Horned Lark: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide winter visitor.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Tufted Titmouse: Reports were routine for this common southeastern resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This was a low numbers year; the best count was 7 at PP 14 Dec (RSt), which no doubt contributed to the 20 on the Lincoln CBC (fide LRB); only 46 were reported statewide on CBCs.

White-breasted Nuthatch: The 50+ in FF 31 Dec (EB) was an excellent single-observer tally, suggestive of the presence of winter visitors as well as residents.

Pygmy Nuthatch: This is a common species on the Pine Ridge, as indicated by the tally of 41 on the Harrison CBC 22 Dec (fide B&DW); this tally may also have been augmented by winter visitors.

Brown Creeper: Numbers reported were generally as expected, but the 7 on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec was a count high there fide (TJW).

Winter Wren: A few winter in the southeast each year, such as one in Omaha 12 Jan (JR), but unexpected were singles on the Harrison CBC 22 Dec (WM, MB), and at LO 4-15 Jan (SMa, RMa); both were identified by calls as Winter Wrens and not Pacific Wrens. One was a bit northerly on the Ponca SP CBC 14 Dec (BFH).

Marsh Wren: Wintering attempts are expected in the North Platte River Valley; 2 were on each of the Scottsbluff CBC 14 Dec (fide AK) and North Platte CBC 28 Dec (fide TJW).

Carolina Wren: As expected, all but one of the 31 CBC Carolina Wrens were in the southeast, the exception was one at Norfolk 8-15 Dec, which was present for the CBC 14 Dec (fide DH).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Wintering occurs most years in the southeast, but one in Sheridan Co 15 Feb (WF) was only the 5th Panhandle record for Feb.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Similarly-distributed in winter to Golden-crowned, but in much lower numbers, a surprise was one as far west as southeastern Garden Co 15 Jan (SM), only the 7th Jan-Feb record for the Panhandle.

Eastern Bluebird: This species was reported through the period as far north as Knox Co (MB); it is less than annual there in mid-winter.

Mountain Bluebird: A good count of wintering birds at the regular location in the cedar canyons of southeast Lincoln Co was the 12 there 16 Feb (TJW); 2 had arrived there by 29 Dec (LE).

Townsend's Solitaire: A good count of 112 was made on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD). This species has been found on 11 of the 20 years of the Seward-Branched Oak Lake CBC, but this year's tally of 7 was a count high (fide JG); also easterly were singles in Gage Co 20 Jan (LE) and Lancaster Co 3 Feb (LE).

Hermit Thrush: This species is not uncommon into Dec in the southeast, but overwintering is less than annual; one was at BOL from 14 Dec (MW) at least until 11 Jan (MW, LE). The 3 on the DeSoto NWR CBC 15 Dec (fide JT) was a good count for the date.

American Robin: Large counts reported were the "thousands" between Center and Niobrara, Knox Co, 12 Jan (MB) and 1000+ in Antelope Co 2 Feb (MB). The 200 in Scotts Bluff Co 11 Jan was considered an "unusual number" there for the date (KD).

Northern Mockingbird: This species is becoming more conspicuous in winter; one wintered in the North Platte area (TJW), 2 were on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD), and one on the Omaha CBC 21 Dec was the first there since 1978 (SMa, BG).

Brown Thrasher: Although there are numerous records into Dec, over-wintering is unexpected; one that wintered in a Lincoln yard (NP) was only the 5th such documented record. One in Lincoln Co 5 Jan (LDe) was only the 9th record for Jan-Feb away from the southeast.

European Starling: Good numbers were reported on the North Platte CBC, where 12,510 were tallied 28 Dec (fide TJW), about 40% of the statewide CBC total of 31,014. Highest CBC local count tallies are 100,000+.

American Pipit: The 4 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) comprised only the 6th record for Dec for the state; there are none for Jan-Feb.

Bohemian Waxwing: There were only 2 reports, both from expected locations in the Pine Ridge: 36 were found on the Harrison CBC 22 Dec (MB, fide B&DW) and 2 were in Chadron 21 Dec (NV).

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine for this common statewide winter visitor.

Lapland Longspur: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide winter visitor.

Snow Bunting: Reports were widespread although total numbers were only average. Best CBC count was 22 at Scottsbluff 14 Dec (fide AK), and 14 were in Dodge Co 3 Jan (D&JP). In all, about 64 were reported.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: One on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) was only the second winter record; it may have been the same individual photographed there 13 Feb 2013 (MB).

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: The 16 on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD) and 5 in Lincoln Co 17 Dec (TJW) were good westerly counts, and the presence of 1-2 in Antelope Co 19 Jan-23 Feb (WF, MB) was an unexpected northerly mid-winter record.

Spotted Towhee: This species is rare in mid-winter in the south and absent elsewhere; one in Knox Co 12 Jan (MB) was only the 7th record for Jan-Feb north of the Platte River Valley.

Eastern Towhee: There are several Dec and CBC records from the southeast, likely birds attempting to over-winter, but Jan-Feb records are few. This year one was at a Lancaster Co location 1 Jan and 14 Feb (BW).

American Tree Sparrow: Distribution was apparently very spotty; an active statewide birder turned in 41 eBird lists for the period, only 11 of which recorded this species (WF). As well, none were seen in Dixon Co between 10 Jan and 3 Feb (JJ). However 803 were counted on the Branched Oak-Seward CBC 15 Dec (fide JG).

Field Sparrow: One in North Platte 12 Feb (TJW) was only the 11th record for Jan-Feb for the state.

Fox Sparrow: The trend in recent years of increasing mid-winter reports in the southeast after mid-Jan continued, with 3 still present at BOL 22 Jan but not later (LE), 5 at Malcolm Cem 8 Feb (RSt), one in Douglas Co 9 Feb (JGr), 2 in Lancaster Co 12 Feb (LE), and 1-2 in southeastern Washington Co 18-22 Feb (CNK, EB). Away from the southeast the only report was of one at a feeder in southeast Lincoln Co 9-14 Feb (LDe). Prior to these records, there had been only about 25 reports for Feb, including over-wintering birds, and so the 5 this winter is a significant showing.

Song Sparrow: Good numbers winter at least in the southeast; best CBC tally was the 33 at DeSoto NWR 15 Dec (fide JT).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Numbers were present in southeastern Washington Co last winter, 2012-2013, and this winter was a repeat, with 8 on the DeSoto NWR CBC 15 Dec (fide JT) and the latest one at Boyer Chute NWR 25 Jan (LE). This is still a rare, likely less-than-annual, winter visitor in the extreme southeast.

Swamp Sparrow: This is another sparrow species that generally is a rare, likely less-than-annual, winter visitor in the southeast. This winter a surprise was the wintering group at PL; 5 were there 3 Jan (LE), with 3 there 15 Feb (LE) and one on 25 Feb (LE). The only other reports were of singles on the Omaha CBC 21 Dec (fide BG) and at FF 25 Jan (MW).

White-throated Sparrow: This species winters each year in the southeast in varying numbers and is less than annual elsewhere. Thus unexpected was one in Antelope Co 23 Feb (MB). Numbers were low, even in the southeast.

Harris's Sparrow: This species is rare in the west; the 3 reports were of singles on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec (fide TJW), in a Lincoln Co yard 1 Jan and 6 Feb (VC, photo), and in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 7 Feb (KD).

White-crowned Sparrow: Reports were routine for this uncommon winter visitor in the west, rare east.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: This form is an uncommon winter visitor in the west; the only reports were from CBCs, with one at Scottsbluff 14 Dec (fide AK), 3 at Crawford 21 Dec (fide B&DW) and 6 at LM 28 Dec (fide SJD).

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide winter visitor.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: Reports are increasing as observers pay more attention to plumage variation in Nebraska juncos. This form appears to be an uncommon statewide winter visitor. Two wintered in a Dodge Co yard (D&JP, photo), one was in Cass Co 16 Feb (SMa, details), 3-4 were at FF 24 Feb (EB), and one was in Lincoln Co 17 Dec (TJW).

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: In the east, CBCs that separated out Oregon and Slate-colored Juncos (Lincoln and Branched Oak-Seward) reported 4 amongst 602 Slate-colored Juncos; Oregon Junco is uncommon in the east.

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: This form is less than annual in the east; some highly-colored Oregon Juncos are mis-identified as this form. Details were provided for one at an Omaha feeder 1-7 Feb (JR).

Northern Cardinal: A male was "singing strongly" in Lincoln on the rather early date 28 Jan (TEL), as was another in Bellevue the same day (CNK). There are a few previous reports of singing in late Jan, the earliest 13 Jan (JGJ).

Red-winged Blackbird: This species tends to be scarcest in mid-winter, when occasional wandering flocks of mixed gender and age may be found. This winter up to 2200 wintered at BOL (LE), and CBCs totaled 10,065 birds, more than usual. Territorial males were first noted 13 Feb at North Platte (TJW), and a male flock of 300, usually the first type of flock to arrive, was in Sheridan Co 14 Feb (WF).

Eastern Meadowlark: First reported songs were on 22 Feb in Pawnee Co (EA); there are two earlier such records, 13 and 16 Feb, in prior years.

Western Meadowlark: "Multiple singing" was heard in northern Antelope Co 12 Jan (MB), the earliest singing on record. There is another late Jan record in southern Nebraska, but most are in mid-Feb.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Rather early was one in Kearney Co 23 Feb (LR, RH); earliest dates, usually lone males with Red-winged Blackbirds, are 17-19 Feb. The 3 on the Calamus-Loup CBC 19 Dec (fide DH) were northerly for the date; there are only about 5 records for Jan.

Rusty Blackbird: This species is a late fall and early spring migrant in the east, but rare in mid-winter; numbers are lowest in mid-Jan through early Feb. Thus of interest were a westerly bird on the LM CBC 28 Dec (fide SJD), 30 rather late fall migrants in Dixon Co 2 Jan (JJ), and 12 rather early spring migrants in Antelope Co 23 Feb (MB).

Brewer's Blackbird: Reports were routine for this abundant fall migrant westward, uncommon in the east, and rare winter visitor in the south.

Common Grackle: One in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 8 Feb (KD) was only the 12th Feb record away from the east.

Great-tailed Grackle: An impressive flock of 150 was counted on the North Platte CBC 28 Dec (fide TJW); flocks of this size are unusual in late Dec.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Away from the usual southeast Nebraska range for the CBC period were 5 at LM 28 Dec (fide SJD), one at Calamus-Loup 19 Dec (fide DH) and 6 at Norfolk 14 Dec (fide DH). Unexpected for mid-winter were the 5 in Cass Co 31 Jan (CNK), where the species is less than annual in late Jan.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: The only report of this locally uncommon winter visitor in the western Panhandle was of 3 at Scotts Bluff NM on the Scottsbluff CBC 14 Dec (KD, fide AK).

House Finch: Observers in Lancaster Co found increased numbers; 97 were counted 12 Feb (LE) and as of 8 Feb there were "significantly more House Finches this year than I've seen before" (RSt).

Purple Finch: Numbers were lower than in most winters; only 30 were on CBCs.

Cassin's Finch: The only report of this annual winter visitor in the Panhandle was of 3 in Gering Cem along with 2 others elsewhere (total 5) on the Scottsbluff CBC 14 Dec (fide AK, KD).

Red Crossbill: Most were reported from the west as expected, including 42 on the Harrison CBC 22 Dec (fide B&DW) and 40 in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co, 29 Dec (JR). The only reports farther east were of "multiple" birds in Cherry Co 5 Jan (MB) and one in Boyd Co 28 Dec (MB).

Common Redpoll: Only 11 were reported, a drastic change from last winter's maxi-invasion year with over 1500 reported; this winter, 6 were on the Lincoln CBC 14 Dec (fide LRB), one on the Ponca SP CBC 14 Dec (fide BFH), and 4 at FF 31 Dec (EB).

Pine Siskin: Continuing a lack-luster "winter finch" winter, numbers of siskins were low; at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder only 10-15 were present, when usually 50-75 were there (AK), and only 55 were tallied on the statewide CBCs, 29 of these at LM 28 Dec (fide SJD).

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide winter visitor.

House Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

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Breeding Season Observations of Sandhill Cranes on the Niobrara River in Nebraska

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Central Platte Natural Resources District (CPNRD), Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) and the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (Central) have been involved in the monitoring of Interior Least Terns (*Sternula antillarum athalassos*) and Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) along portions on the lower Niobrara River in northeast Nebraska since 2005. On two occasions, we observed a pair of adult Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) during the breeding season.

A pair of adult cranes was observed on June 8, 2011, on the Niobrara River approximately 7.8 km below the U.S. Route 137 bridge in Holt County. On July 17, 2013, a pair of adult cranes was observed on the Niobrara River in Boyd County (Figure 1). On neither occasion were young observed with the adults. The cranes observed in 2013 were viewed from a distance for several minutes prior to their departure. As they circled and flew off in a westerly direction, no young were observed. However, the timing of the observations, the surrounding abundant and undisturbed grassland and wetland habitats, as well as the full reproductive color (rusty-brown feather painting, see Figures 2 and 3 on page 19) could indicate a nesting attempt in the area. GPS locations were recorded for each crane sighting.

Prior to their extirpation in the early 1900s, Sandhill Cranes were believed to be common breeders throughout Nebraska, particularly in the Sandhills region, and were also found during the breeding season in northern Nebraska, including Cedar, Knox, Holt and Cherry Counties (Ducey 1988, Bruner 1901). Jorgensen (2002, 2003) documented breeding season observations of Sandhill Cranes in the eastern Rainwater Basin (Clay, Fillmore, Hamilton and Thayer counties) which occurred from 1992-2003. More recently, Sandhill Crane nesting has been documented in the North Platte River Valley in Nebraska (Grier 2007). See Table 1 for additional reports of Sandhill Crane breeding season observations. The authors of this report document recent breeding season observations of adult Sandhill Cranes in Boyd and Holt counties.

Figure 1. 2011 and 2013 Sandhill Crane sightings in Boyd and Holt counties.

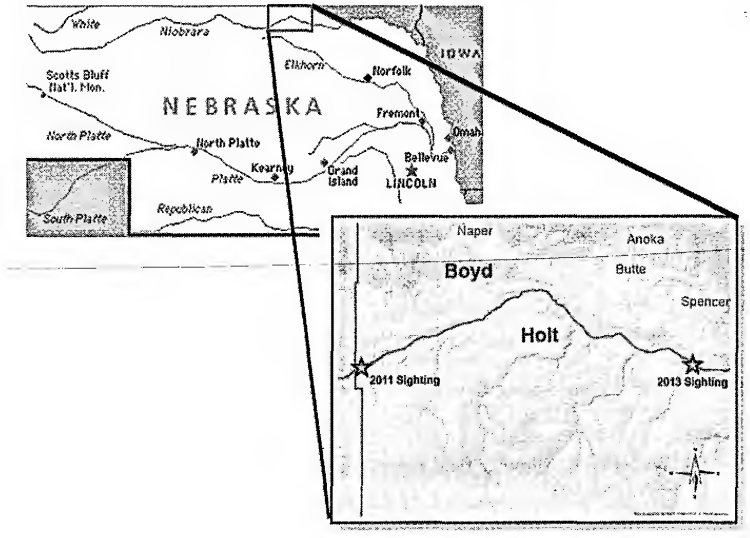

Table 1. Additional reports of Sandhill Crane breeding season observations in recent years.

County	Year	Reference
Clay	1996, 1998, 1999	Silcock 1999a, 1999b
Sioux	2002	Silcock 2006
Morrill	2006, 2008, 2010	Silcock 2006, 2008, 2010
Dixon	2006	Silcock 2006
Garfield	2007	Silcock 2007
Scotts Bluff	2012	Silcock 2012a, 2012b
Butler	2012	Silcock 2012a
Buffalo	2012	Silcock 2012a
Dakota	2012	Silcock 2012b

Literature Cited:

Bruner L. 1901. Birds that nest in Nebraska. Proceedings of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union. 2:48-61.

Ducey JD. 1988. Nebraska birds, breeding status and distribution. Omaha (NE): Simon-Boardman Books.

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Silcock WR. 2012b. Summer field report, June-July 2012. Nebraska Bird Review. 80(3):86-103.

Figure 2. Adult Sandhill Cranes observed on July 17, 2013, near the north bank of the Niobrara River in Boyd County. (Photograph by Mark Peyton).

Figure 3. Adult Sandhill Cranes observed on July 17, 2013, flying over the Niobrara River in Boyd County. (Photograph by Mark Peyton).

What do birds in Nebraska eat? We requested photos of birds feeding or carrying food. Images on the following pages show birds with a sample of the great variety of foods they consume: mammals, other birds, a snake, a fish, insects and other invertebrates, as well as seeds and fruit.

American Robin with earthworm, La Vista, Sarpy Co., 9 June 2013. Photo by Steve Javorsky.

American Robin with Eastern red cedar berry, Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., Feb 2006. Photo by Carlos Grande.

Female Purple Martin with red admiral butterfly in the photographer's yard, Creighton, Knox Co., 6 July 2014. Photo by Mark Brogie.

Male Purple Martin with snowberry clearwing moth in the photographer's yard, Creighton, Knox Co., 29 June 2014. Photo by Mark Brogie.

Adult non-breeding male Lazuli Bunting eating millet in photographer's yard, Bellevue, Sarpy Co., 14 May 2014. Photo by Babs Padelford.

Grasshopper Sparrow with grasshopper, Eastern Rainwater Basin, June 2006. Photo by Carlos Grande.

Cedar Waxwing eating ornamental crab apples, Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., Dec 2012. Photo by Carlos Grande.

2nd winter Herring Gull eating unidentified fish, Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., March 2005. Photo by Carlos Grande.

Adult Sharp-shinned Hawk eating Eurasian Collared-Dove in photographer's yard, Gering, Scotts Bluff Co., 27 Oct 2012. Photo by Marie Smith.

Juvenile Red-tailed Hawk eating Eastern fox squirrel, La Vista, Sarpy Co., 22 July 2012. Photo by Steve Javorsky.

Adult Cooper's Hawk in photographer's yard with prey identified by the photographer as a House Finch, Omaha, Douglas Co., 15 June 2014. Photo by Craig Crews.

Juvenile Rough-legged Hawk with unidentified small mammal along highway 88, Banner Co., 29 March 2014. Photo by Marie Smith.

Swainson's Thrush eating grain in photographer's yard, Omaha, Douglas Co., 15 June 2014. Photo by Craig Crews.

Male Orchard Oriole with mulberry, Bohemia Prairie, Knox Co., 3 July 2013. Photo by Mark Brogie.

Yellow-throated Vireo with unidentified fly, Hormel Park, Dodge Co., 19 May 2014. Photo by Ken Shuster.

Turkey Vulture carrying snake near Dawson, Richardson Co., 17 May 2014. Photo by Craig Crews.

Female Pileated Woodpecker feeding juvenile along Missouri Trail, Fontenelle Forest, Bellevue, Sarpy Co., 8 June 2014. Photo by John Carlini.

Downy Woodpecker juvenile on right (note red crown) being fed by adult, La Vista, Sarpy Co., 22 June 2014. Photo by Steve Javorsky.

Adult Northern Cardinal pair sharing food in the photographer's yard, Hastings, Adams Co., 29 May 2014. Photo by Paul Julian.

Disputing Barn Swallows, Dixon Co., 20 May 2014. Photo by Jan Johnson.

Breeding adult male Western Tanager eating orange in photographer's yard, Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co., 17 May 2014. Photo by Kathy DeLara.

Immature Northern Saw-whet Owl in nest box, first documented nesting in Nebraska, Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co., 25 May 2014. Photo by Kathy DeLara.

Wood Thrush on nest, Hormel Park. Dodge Co., 25 May 2014. Photo by John Carlini.

Yellow-headed Blackbird males at Offutt Base Lake, Sarpy Co., 24 March 2014. Photo by Clem Klaphake.

Cape May Warbler, Towl Park, Omaha, Douglas Co., 14 May 2014. Photo by Joe Gubanyi.

Yellow Warbler with unidentified insect in beak, Hormel Park, Dodge Co., 16 May 2014. Photo by Ken Shuster.

Male Northern Parula, Winter Creek Road, Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co., 20 May 2014. Photo by Marie Smith.

Magnolia Warbler, Henry Doorly Zoo, Omaha, Douglas Co., 14 May 2014. Photo by Garrett Day.

Common Yellowthroat with unidentified insects in beak, Ferry Landing WMA, Knox Co., 6 July 2014. Photo by Mark Brogie.

2013 Christmas Bird Counts

by Don Paseka

Fifteen counts were held during the 2013-2014 season. Following a cold snap in early December, the weather was seasonable and mostly dry, but with very limited open water in most circles. An example of the consequences of this can be seen in the Branched Oak-Seward count tally. Although this count has a history of being very productive for water-related birds in most years, only 3 species were found this year: Canada Goose (16), Mallard (2) and Belted Kingfisher (1). The total species count in all the counts was 135, four less than the past two years and historically ranking sixth highest, while the total of 282,693 individuals ranks as the eighth highest. In all, 12 species tied or set new high counts. While 14 species were found in every circle, 25 were seen in only one circle, and of those 12 were single birds.

Most of the large Anseriformes had an excellent year. The 701 Ross's Geese, all at Lake McConaughy, smashed the previous high count of 33 from 1998. The 97,928 Canada Geese were also a new high count total for the state, as were the 7,689 Cackling Geese, which topped their previous high of 6946 set in 2010. For the fifth straight year Trumpeter Swans set a new high count, with 155 seen this year. After they first appeared as a count week bird in 1991, Trumpeters were seen twice more in the 1990s and have been counted every year since 2000. The single Tundra Swan found at North Platte was only the fourth Christmas Count sighting in the past 50 years, and the first since 1999, when 11 were found on the Omaha count.

Several diurnal raptors species had a good year. The 184 Rough-legged Hawks were a new high count, besting the total of 109 found in 2010. The 15 Golden Eagles beat the old high of 11 set in 1971. Bald Eagles were found in every circle, and the total of 368 is only slightly less than last year's high count (375) for that species, and the total of 28 Cooper's Hawks is second only to the 36 birds found in 2007.

Perhaps as a result of the numerous trees killed by the 2011 Missouri River flooding, woodpecker numbers continue on the upswing. With counts of 484 Red-bellied Woodpeckers, 150 Hairy Woodpeckers, and 9 Pileated Woodpeckers, those three species bested high counts set only last year (459, 131 and 7, respectively). This year's 208 Red-headed Woodpeckers were second only to the 232 found in 1971, and the 622 Downy Woodpeckers also rank as the second highest count behind the 657 found in 2011.

Although Black-billed Magpies have been found every year, this year's count of 32 is the second lowest. The lowest count was in 1967 when only 16 birds were found; highest was 303 in 2001.

In the odds and ends department, 84 Pygmy Nuthatches, which were largely absent in the 1980s and 1990s, were found in three circles this season and have appeared every year since 2002; high count is 131 in 2005. This year's 3 Northern Mockingbirds tied for high count with those found in 1965, 2008 and 2010. The 4 American Pipits at Lake McConaughy were the first recorded on a Nebraska count since 1972 when 128 were found. The sighting of 36 Bohemian Waxwings at Harrison was only the sixth time this species has been found on any CBC in the state since 1980.

Several of the sparrows and finches had a good year. The 12 Lincoln's Sparrows found in four circles beat the old high count of 7 from 1998. The 59 White-throated Sparrows beat last year's high count of 51 for that species. The sighting of 3 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches in the Scottsbluff circle was only the fifth time that this species has been counted: 10 were found in 2010 along with singles in 1978, 1989, and 2008. House Finches set a new high count of 1803, bettering the 1250 found in 2005. This was only the seventh year in which Cassin's Finches (5 at Scottsbluff) were found; high count is 14 in 2002.

It should be noted when comparing this year's high and low counts to highs and lows from past years, that counts are influenced by a number of factors. As mentioned above, weather in the weeks preceding the count period and on the day of a count influence numbers of individuals and species. The number of counts held is also a factor. This year there were 15 counts, and count numbers in the teens have been the norm since 2001. Prior to that, there were often fewer counts run. In 1990, for example, there were only 6 counts held. Fewer counts generally mean fewer observers and, more importantly, fewer observer hours. Observer hours and party hours data from past counts may be found on the National Audubon website (http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx).

The sizes of count areas, which were not always the standard 15-mile diameter circles that we use today, have also changed. For example, the state had been divided, in the 1950s, into 5 areas for the purpose of reporting nesting records. In 1963, the Christmas Bird Count results were reported from those areas. The Panhandle counties comprised Area 1, but only one count (Dawes Co., 4 observers, 21 species) was done in that area. In contrast, 7 counts (61 species total) were done in Area 5E, composed of the 15 most southeastern counties. (*The Nebraska Bird Review* Vol. 32 No. 2, pages 33-36).

Different counts also mean different habitats. Prior to 1991, the only gulls routinely found on Nebraska CBCs were Ring-billed and Herring, but the inclusion of Lake McConaughy in a count circle changed that. In 2003, 11 gull species were found at Lake McConaughy (*The Nebraska Bird Review* Vol. 72 No. 1, pages 24-35) and other water-dependent species now routinely appear on the state CBC tally. On the down side, urban count circles such as Omaha and Lincoln are more populated, paved and built-upon than they were in the past, reducing the bird-friendly habitat and skewing the numbers towards Rock Pigeons and European Starlings.

2013 CBC Site Data

	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Total Party Hours[d]	Low Temp.	High Temp.	Sky	Precipitation
Ames	17 Dec	58	15,449	11	31	25	45	clear	none
Beaver Valley	26 Dec	32	3,037	5	9	23	41	cloudy	none
Branched Oak-Seward	15 Dec	58	13,412	38	59	14	34	clear/pt. cloudy	none
Calamus-Loup	19 Dec	55	13,820	7	23	17	29	cloudy	light snow
Crawford	21 Dec	33	1,780	8	N/A	14	24	N/A	N/A
DeSoto-Boyer	15 Dec	72	33,199	26	79	17	28	cloudy	none
Grand Island	14 Dec	46	7,470	22	31	13	33	cloudy/pt. cloudy	none
Harrison	22 Dec	37	1,382	6	N/A	18	26	cloudy	snow
Lake McConaughy	28 Dec	101	66,918	33	64	15	55	clear/pt cloudy	none
Lincoln	14 Dec	64	19,424	40	78	10	25	cloudy	none
Norfolk	14 Dec	58	11,593	14	32	12	23	pt. clear/ pt.cloudy	none
North Platte	28 Dec	69	33,706	10	10	19	55	clear	none
Omaha	21 Dec	70	19,382	33	75	20	23	cloudy	none
Ponca S.P.	14 Dec	59	4,563	20	44	8	18	cloudy	none
Scottsbluff	14 Dec	67	37,558	15	27	31	43	pt cloudy	none
		135	282,693[a]	288[a]		17[b]	33[b]		
				197[c]					

a- total (sum of column values)

b- average

c-number of people who participated in CBCs. Note: many observers participated in more than one CBC.

d-the sum of hours spent driving and walking during daylight, excluding feeder watching and owling

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	Beaver Valley	BOL-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
Gr White-fronted Goose	2					2		
Snow Goose	1			3		18	1	
Ross's Goose								
Cackling Goose	32			101		1		
Canada Goose	6064		16	3673		5222	3992	4
Trumpeter Swan				60		14		
Tundra Swan								
Wood Duck	cw					4	15	
Gadwall								
American Wigeon								
Mallard	2132	2015	2	1740		20453	717	5
Northern Shoveler	cw					1	25	
Northern Pintail								
Green-winged Teal	3			4			12	
Canvasback								
Redhead								
Ring-necked Duck	4							
Greater Scaup								
Lesser Scaup	2					6		
Long-tailed Duck								
Bufflehead						5		
Common Goldeneye	5			82		26	16	
Barrow's Goldeneye								
Hooded Merganser	cw							
Common Merganser	26			407		16		
Red-breasted Merganser								
Ruddy Duck								
Duck sp.								
Northern Bobwhite	cw	11	20					
Ring-necked Pheasant		8	27	4	18	3		
Sharp-tailed Grouse					2			11
Greater Prairie-Chicken			2				22	

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Gr White-fronted Goose	24		1	20	21			70
Snow Goose	12620	1		6	7	150	1	12808
Ross's Goose	701							701
Cackling Goose	3700	32	32	3652	54		85	7689
Canada Goose	14600	11996	5532	7547	10688	168	28426	97928
Trumpeter Swan	53			2	26			155
Tundra Swan				1				1
Wood Duck							4	23
Gadwall	113	6		63	2		15	199
American Wigeon	27			23			50	100
Mallard	23700	1165	716	5736	515	320	5700	64916
Northern Shoveler	3	1		6			5	41
Northern Pintail	22		1	33	1			57
Green-winged Teal	104	8		99	50		4	284
Canvasback	36			1				37
Redhead	39		1	11			8	59
Ring-necked Duck	147			87			1	239
Greater Scaup	20		2					22
Lesser Scaup	56		3				9	76
Long-tailed Duck	2							2
Bufflehead	180			1				186
Common Goldeneye	261	35	9	45	50	4	98	631
Barrow's Goldeneye							1	1
Hooded Merganser	3			2	1			6
Common Merganser	4300			11	76	8	1	4845
Red-breasted Merganser	11							11
Ruddy Duck	1						1	2
Duck sp.					175			175
Northern Bobwhite	2	4	25					62
Ring-necked Pheasant	4		4	1	2	7	13	91
Sharp-tailed Grouse								13
Greater Prairie-Chicken	11					9		44

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	Beaver Valley	BOL-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
Wild Turkey	30	78	35	137	314	316	222	8
Common Loon								
Pied-billed Grebe								
Horned Grebe								
Red-necked Grebe								
Western Grebe								
Clark's Grebe								
Great Blue Heron	4			1			4	
Bald Eagle	13	6	1	29	18	64	9	2
adult					10		3	1
immature					8		6	1
unspecified age	13	6	1	29		64		
Northern Harrier	1	8	1	4		6	5	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1		1	1		4	1	
Cooper's Hawk	2		6	3		3		
Accipiter sp.								
Red-tailed Hawk	39	15	52	6	2	115	9	
Ferruginous Hawk								
Rough-legged Hawk	cw	2	1	9	14	12	13	5
Buteo sp.					1	1		
Golden Eagle				1	5	1		5
Virginia Rail								
American Coot							1	
Killdeer								
Wilson's Snipe	1							
Franklin's Gull				1				
Mew Gull								
Ring-billed Gull				21				
California Gull								
Herring Gull								
Thayer's Gull								
Lesser Black-backed Gull								

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Wild Turkey	76	36	38	63	105	253	25	1736
Common Loon	1							1
Pied-billed Grebe	1	1						2
Horned Grebe	cw							
Red-necked Grebe	1							1
Western Grebe	34							34
Clark's Grebe	1							1
Great Blue Heron	5	11		2			3	30
Bald Eagle	112	9	3	6	57	15	24	368
adult								14
immature								15
unspecified age	112	9	3	6	57	15	24	339
Northern Harrier	13	4	4	5	3	7	6	67
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	5		1	3	1	2	21
Cooper's Hawk	2	3	2	1	4		2	28
Accipiter sp.		2						2
Red-tailed Hawk	32	36	38	33	94	20	10	501
Ferruginous Hawk				1			2	3
Rough-legged Hawk	18	1	10	27	2	58	12	184
Buteo sp.		6					1	9
Golden Eagle	1						2	15
Virginia Rail	2							2
American Coot	1504	81	1				55	1642
Killdeer	13	2		2			2	19
Wilson's Snipe	6		1	15				23
Franklin's Gull								1
Mew Gull	cw							
Ring-billed Gull	584			3				608
California Gull	4							4
Herring Gull	187					2		189
Thayer's Gull	2							2
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1							1

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	Beaver Valley	BOL-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
Glaucous Gull								
Rock Pigeon	123	47	95	12	54	229	492	24
Eurasian Collared-Dove	54	10	145	5	42	73	158	10
Mourning Dove	18		14			5	1	
Eastern Screech-Owl	2			1		3	5	3
Great Horned Owl	5	2	13	5		5		2
Snowy Owl								
Barred Owl	3		2			3		
Long-eared Owl			1					
Short-eared Owl	1							
Belted Kingfisher	8		1	2			3	
Red-headed Woodpecker		2	7			38		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	32	5	69	3		119	9	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1		3			4		
Downy Woodpecker	33	12	70	10	4	144	29	1
Hairy Woodpecker	6		13	8	2	29	3	4
Northern Flicker	25	6	74	8	9	71	9	1
Red-shafted					2			
Yellow-shafted			58			71		
Red-shafted x Yellow-shafted					1			
Unspecified	25	6	16	8	6		9	1
Pileated Woodpecker						5		
American Kestrel		1	2		3	11	7	
Merlin				1		1		2
Prairie Falcon		1						
Falcon sp.			1					1
Say's Phoebe								
Loggerhead Shrike		1						
Northern Shrike	3		8	4		6		
Pinyon Jay					4			1
Blue Jay	37	3	169	7	12	182	41	4
Black-billed Magpie					5			1

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Glaucous Gull	1							1
Rock Pigeon	186	967	409	565	186	89	696	4174
Eurasian Collared-Dove	104	1	110	100	18	5	456	1291
Mourning Dove	6	150	2		57	2		255
Eastern Screech-Owl	2		1		1	2		20
Great Horned Owl	11	4	4		4	1	1	57
Snowy Owl	cw							
Barred Owl						1		9
Long-eared Owl	2	1	2			1		7
Short-eared Owl	1				1			3
Belted Kingfisher	6	9	2	4	8	1	1	45
Red-headed Woodpecker		1			160			208
Red-bellied Woodpecker	14	57	11	5	139	21		484
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2		1	1			12
Downy Woodpecker	29	98	26	19	130	12	5	622
Hairy Woodpecker	13	14	7	5	30	11	5	150
Northern Flicker	45	31	9	17	44	18	19	386
Red-shafted	13			6			3	24
Yellow-shafted	20	18		2	44		2	215
Red-shafted x Yellow-shafted	1						3	5
Unspecified	11	13	9	9		18	11	142
Pileated Woodpecker					4			9
American Kestrel	3	8	10	9	12		20	86
Merlin	1	1		1	4	1	2	14
Prairie Falcon				2		1	2	6
Falcon sp.		1						3
Say's Phoebe	cw							
Loggerhead Shrike								1
Northern Shrike	4	1	1	1		7	2	37
Pinyon Jay								5
Blue Jay	8	244	82	8	148	63	43	1051
Black-billed Magpie	16						10	32

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	Beaver Valley	BOL-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
American Crow	52	31	232	5000	29	107	33	42
Horned Lark	48		6	9	295	63		788
Black-capped Chickadee	66	1	77	11	10	259	7	17
Tufted Titmouse						21		
Red-breasted Nuthatch			4			2		6
White-breasted Nuthatch	50	13	84	12	2	145	10	1
Pygmy Nuthatch					3			41
Brown Creeper	2		2	1		6		
Winter Wren								1
Marsh Wren								
Carolina Wren	1		3			5		
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	2	1			2		
Eastern Bluebird	15		172			124	3	
Townsend's Solitaire			7	1	17			19
Hermit Thrush						3		
American Robin	536	219	1778	280	27	264	2	33
Northern Mockingbird								
Brown Thrasher								
European Starling	5173	181	920	137	335	1846	744	84
American Pipit								
Bohemian Waxwing								36
Cedar Waxwing	127		396	17		81	3	
Lapland Longspur	40				1			27
Snow Bunting				10				1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3		18			1		
Spotted Towhee						6		
Eastern Towhee						2		
American Tree Sparrow	41	91	803	287	91	602	45	2
Fox Sparrow			4			10		
Song Sparrow	2		12	2	1	33	2	
Lincoln's Sparrow		1	2			8		
Swamp Sparrow								

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
American Crow	1	51	42	51	123	67	3	5864
Horned Lark	183	8	56	45	2	454	78	2035
Black-capped Chickadee	16	101	25	5	271	56	19	941
Tufted Titmouse		1			41			63
Red-breasted Nuthatch	5	20	1	3	1		4	46
White-breasted Nuthatch	8	87	32	8	175	51		678
Pygmy Nuthatch							4	48
Brown Creeper	3	14	1	7	9	1	1	47
Winter Wren						1		2
Marsh Wren	1			2			2	5
Carolina Wren		1	1		20			31
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	10	3	5	1			31
Eastern Bluebird	3	88		5	62	23		495
Townsend's Solitaire	112			8			19	183
Hermit Thrush								3
American Robin	363	232	158	132	100	265	183	4572
Northern Mockingbird	2				1			3
Brown Thrasher		1						1
European Starling	918	1557	2733	12510	2915	381	580	31014
American Pipit	4							4
Bohemian Waxwing								36
Cedar Waxwing	11	27	1		189	72		924
Lapland Longspur	55				100	52		275
Snow Bunting	cw					1	22	34
Yellow-rumped Warbler	17							39
Spotted Towhee		1			1			8
Eastern Towhee					1			3
American Tree Sparrow	111	354	185	81	310	357	56	3416
Fox Sparrow						1		15
Song Sparrow	26	4	1	4	23		9	119
Lincoln's Sparrow					1			12
Swamp Sparrow					1			1

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	Beaver Valley	BOL-Seward	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harrison
White-throated Sparrow	cw		6			21		
Harris's Sparrow	10		65	23		83	11	
White-crowned Sparrow			3	2		37		
Sparrow sp.						13	105	
Dark-eyed Junco	199		735	256	98	1272	28	51
Slate-colored			387		2			
Oregon			2		3	1		
Pink-sided								
White-winged					3			
unspecified subspecies	199		346	256	90	1271	28	51
Northern Cardinal	33	3	191	12		176	35	
Red-winged Blackbird	11	197	5731	1096	1	152	20	
Western Meadowlark							24	
Meadowlark sp.	16		68			120		
Yellow-headed Blackbird				3				
Rusty Blackbird			33					
Brewer's Blackbird								
Common Grackle	1	7				1	7	
Great-tailed Grackle							6	
Brown-headed Cowbird				1				
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch								
Purple Finch			2			10		
Cassin's Finch								
House Finch	21		159	57	80	34	70	42
Red Crossbill								42
Common Redpoll								
Pine Siskin	1			1	2	1		
American Goldfinch	90	23	565	209	80	170	91	30
House Sparrow	194	35	482	40	199	298	403	25
TOTAL SPECIES	58	32	58	55	33	72	46	37
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	15,449	3,037	13,412	13,820	1,780	33,199	7,470	1,382

2013 Christmas Bird Count

	Lake McConaughy	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
White-throated Sparrow		15			15	2		59
Harris's Sparrow	1	20	11	1	93	50		368
White-crowned Sparrow	21	3	1	1	14	17	29	128
Sparrow sp.								118
Dark-eyed Junco	316	511	369	157	656	343	135	5126
Slate-colored	205	215		153			80	1042
Oregon	16	2		3			12	39
Pink-sided	23			1			5	29
White-winged	6						1	10
unspecified subspecies	66	294	369		656	343	37	4006
Northern Cardinal	19	132	40	12	185	23	1	862
Red-winged Blackbird	163	2	26	1878	322	440	26	10065
Western Meadowlark	1	32	24	16		14		111
Meadowlark sp.	18	31			78		4	335
Yellow-headed Blackbird								3
Rusty Blackbird	1		1			62		97
Brewer's Blackbird	1							1
Common Grackle			2			2		20
Great-tailed Grackle				150				156
Brown-headed Cowbird	5		6					12
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch							3	3
Purple Finch	4				13	1		30
Cassin's Finch							5	5
House Finch	440	375	48	110	108	101	158	1803
Red Crossbill							5	47
Common Redpoll		6				1		7
Pine Siskin	29					5	16	55
American Goldfinch	190	211	49	97	340	286	231	2662
House Sparrow	74	494	678	175	328	176	135	3736
TOTAL SPECIES	101	64	58	69	70	59	67	135
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	66,918	19,424	11,593	33,706	19,382	4,563	37,558	282,693

2013 CBC Participants

Ames Elliott Bedows, Larry Einemann, Jan Johnson, Richard Johnson, Clem Klaphake, Don Paseka (compiler), Janis Paseka, Gary Roberts, Ken Shuster, Ruth Stearns, Jerry Toll (11)

Beaver Valley Dave Heidt, Wayne Mollhoff, Colleen Noecker, Don Noecker (compiler), Duane Wolff (5)

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Calamus-Loup Kathi Gerten, Robert Gerten, Robin Harding, David Heidt (compiler), John Murphy, Lanny Randolph, Duane Wolff (7)

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Harrison Ben Brogie, Mark Brogie, Wayne Mollhoff, Dave Stage, Bruce Walgren (compiler), Donna Walgren (6)

Lake McConaughy Elliott Bedows, Mary Bomberger Brown, Stephen Dinsmore (compiler), Larry Einemann, Luke Hamilton, Roger Hamilton, Robin Harding, Alice Heckman, Bill Huntley, Kay Niyo, Lanny Randolph, Al Reyer, Carin Richardson, Justin Rink (14 + 19 feeder watchers)

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NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION TREASURER'S REPORT December 31, 2013

CHECKING	General Funds	Breeding Bird Atlas	Scholarship Fund	Endowment Fund	Total
Jan. 1, 2013 Balance - Checking	7,061.86	145.04	1,144.61	0.00	8,351.51
RECEIPTS					
Memberships	3,050.00				3,050.00
Subscriptions	460.00				460.00
Donations-Raffle/Silent Auction/Gen	348.00				348.00
NBR-old copies	29.00				29.00
Spring Meet-Covenant Cedars 2013	3,195.50				3,195.50
Fall Meet-Bridgeport-2013	1,540.00				1,540.00
NE Environmental Trust Grant		20,354.00			20,354.00
Transfer from Atlas CD		1,013.47			1,013.47
Transfer from Closed Surplus CD	6,692.13				6,692.13
Sub-total Receipts	15,314.63	21,367.47	0.00	0.00	36,682.10
DISBURSEMENTS					
Spring Meet-Covenant Cedars-2013	1,023.00		315.00		1,338.00
Fall Meet-Bridgeport-2013	1,299.12				1,299.12
Spring Meet-Fontenelle Forest-2014	400.00				400.00
NBR-Jun,Sept,Dec 2012, Mar2013	2,953.53				2,953.53
Newsletter - Printing	245.00				245.00
Postage	255.32				255.32
IRS 501C3 Reinstatemnt	457.50				457.50
Dave Stage 501C3	25.00				25.00
Check Printing	26.50				26.50
Sales Tax & State Incorp. Renewal	61.63				61.63
Accuity Insurance	251.00				251.00
Website-host & renewal	136.29				136.29
Rainwater Basin Joint Venture		5,000.00			5,000.00
Wayne Mollhoff		15,354.00			15,354.00
Sub-total Disbursements	7,133.89	20,354.00	315.00	0.00	27,802.89
Dec. 31, 2013 Balance-Checking	15,242.60	1,158.51	829.61	0.00	17,230.72
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT					
Jan. 1, 2013 Balance - CDs	6,686.45	6,000.00		35,741.47	48,427.92
Principal Additions					
Interest Received/Accrued		13.49		134.13	
Transferred to checking		-1,013.47			
December 31, 2013 Balance - CDs	0.00	5,000.02		35,875.60	40,875.62
Maturity	Closed	41,748.00		41,817.00	
CD Annual Rates		0.00		0.01	
Endowment Principal				35,652.00	
GRAND TOTAL					58,106.34

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SPRING FIELD REPORT, Mar 2014 to May 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This spring period was generally uneventful for most species groups, but there were two major influxes in the east that were likely unprecedented in the memories of most Nebraska ornithologists. First was a major influx of gulls of 10 species at Carter Lake and N.P. Dodge Park in Omaha, including good numbers of California and Thayer's Gulls, as well as Iceland, and most surprisingly, a Glaucous-winged Gull. A bit later in the season was a strong influx of the rarer migrant warblers, such as Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Hooded, Cape May, Bay-breasted, and Black-throated Blue. For spice there was a Worm-eating Warbler and a Prairie Warbler, along with a surprising multi-bird eastern showing of Yellow-breasted Chats. While we're talking about warblers, mention should be made of the interesting study of Louisiana Waterthrushes along Stone Creek in Platte River State Park by John Carlini and Shari Schwartz, which has been ongoing for about 3 years.

Apart from the Glaucous-winged Gull, the rarest report was the female Broad-tailed Hummingbird photographed at a feeder in Dawes Co for the first documented spring record for the species. A pair of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was there also, remaining through the period. A series of hummer sightings at a Scotts Bluff County feeder had to be of interest, as any spring hummer in the west would be a good find; Ruby-throated is perhaps most likely (which is saying something), but Black-chinned has become a distinct possibility, too.

Wayne Mollhoff is legendary in our state for his work on breeding birds and his two atlas projects, but he might have topped it all by placing a nest box in prime Saw-whet Owl habitat and after a couple of years of waiting patiently, having great success with at least one young bird fledged, for Nebraska's first documented breeding record.

Birding is beset with the well-known "that could have been a _____ but I just couldn't nail it". There were three of those this spring; check out the accounts for Greater Roadrunner, Baird's Sparrow, and Hooded Oriole.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBL: Capitol Beach L, Lincoln
CL: Carter L, Omaha
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co

Cem: Cemetery
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar/Knox Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha and Richardson Cos
imm: immature
Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Saunders and Lancaster Cos
juv: juvenile
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LBN: Lakes Babcock & North, Platte Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
m.ob.: many observers
NM: National Monument
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PP: Pioneers Park, Lincoln
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
Res: Reservoir
RWB: wetland complex in several counties of south-central and southeast Nebraska
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
WGP: Walnut Grove Park, Omaha
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln

OBSERVERS

AC: Anton Curtis, Grand Island
AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff
AF: Andrew Furman, Wahoo
AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering;
AKF: Amanda Keep-Filipi, Bayard
AM: Andrea Mott, Yankton, SD
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue
AW: Anita Watkins, Venango
BA: Brad Adrian, Kearney
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
BS: Barbara Straus, Lincoln
BW: Bob Wells, Omaha
CC: Chip Clouse, Arvada, CO
CG: Carolyn Gann, Bishop, CA
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
CO: Chuck Otte, Junction City, KS
CS: Christopher Sarnecki, Kearney
D&JP: Don and Jan Paseka, Ames
DA: Darren Addy, Kearney

DC: Doug Chapman, Sioux Falls, SD
DF: Darlene Feener, Pahrump, NV
DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln
DSt: Dave Stage, Elkhorn
DT: David True, Yankton, SD
EA: Edward Allen, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EBe: Eric Bents, Omaha
EBr: Ed Brogie, Laurel
GD: Garrett Day, Omaha
GH: Greg Hoover, North Platte
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
J&JH: James & Judy Haver, Gothenburg
J&LS: Jim & Linda Swenson, Greenwood
JA: Jan Allen, Livingston, TX
JBe: Jay Beltran, Ogallala
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JCr: Jonathan Crews, Omaha
JGi: Jerry Gieseking, Nebraska City
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JK: Jon King, Lincoln
JL: Jerry Ledbetter, Knoxville, TN
JLL: Jeanine L. Lackey, Bellevue
JM: Jason McIntosh, Omaha
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JPK: Judy P. Kassik, Friend
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha
JW: Juanita Whittecar, Chadron
JWH: John W. Hall, Omaha
KCR: Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Bellevue
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KDy: Keith Dyche, Shenandoah, IA
KF: Ken Finch, Omaha
KPe: Kevin Peck, Gothenburg
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
L&BP: Loren and Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LA: Leif Anderson, Hector, AR
LB: Laurel Badura, Kearney
LBl: Laurene Blankenau, Omaha
LBr: Lori Brummer, Fort Collins, CO
LD: Laurie DeWispelaere, Glennallen, AK
LDe: Linda Deeds, North Platte
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LF: Larry Falk, Nebraska City
LN: Larry Nahm, Bishop, CA

LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden
LS: Larry Snyder, Kimball
LSo: Lizabeth Southworth, Newburyport, MA
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
ML: Mark Lindvall, Valentine
MN: Marsha Nyffeler, Columbus
MS: Marie Smith, Gering
MSS: Mary Sue Shoemaker, Ainsworth
MSt: Matt Stephenson, Ames, IA
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
MWi: Mike Williams, Papillion
NA: Noah Arthur, Lincoln
NF: Nelli Falzgraf, Bellevue
NM: Nicole Miller, Lincoln
NR: Neal Ratzlaff, Omaha
NV: Nick Varvel, Olathe, KS
PH: Paula Hoppe, Colon
PJ: Pete Janzen, Wichita, KS
PL: Peter Lecholat, Sheridan, WY
PP: Pete Peterson, Ogallala
PS: Phil Swanson, Papillion
RB: Rob Bodargus, McCook
RBa: Roland Barth, Bellevue
RD: Roger Dietrich, Yankton, SD
RE: Rick Eades, Lincoln
RG: Richard Griebe, La Jolla, CA
RH: Robin Harding, Minden
RK: Robert King, Longmont, CO
RL: Roger Lawson, Curtis
RM: Robert Martinez, Denver, CO
RMa: Robert Manning, Omaha
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSg: Ruben Siegfried, Gering
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
RT: Rob Tyser, La Crosse, WI
RTe: Richard Temple, Fairbury
RW: Rick Wright, Little Falls, NJ
SA: Scott Allison, North Platte
SB: Scott Buss, Norfolk
SG: Sloane Gray, Kearney
SGr: Susan Gray, Moorefield
SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SQ: Sally Quinn, Nebraska City
SS: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
SSc: Scott Schmidt, Blair

SSu: Shawn Sullivan, Vermilion, SD
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
VK: Val Kollath, Omaha
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WK: William Kaempfer, Boulder, CO
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: This goose is a rare migrant in the Panhandle, and so the 19 at Scottsbluff SL 19 Mar were noteworthy (KD).

Snow Goose: Peak counts in the east were at BOL, where numbers were in excess of 10,000 during 9-17 Mar (MW, LE), reaching an impressive 36,000 on 11 Mar (LE). There were also as many as 15,000 in Sarpy Co 9 Mar (CNK, L&BP). The main flocks passed through fairly quickly; after 1 Apr, best count was 43 (LE, m.ob.).

Ross's Goose: Peak count coincided as expected with Snow Goose peak: 1001 were at BOL 17 Mar (LE); a straggler was still at BOL through 16 May (JL, LE). Two Ross's Geese in Gothenburg Mar 2012 were banded in Nunavut in 1999 and 2005; the 1999 bird clearly a survivor (TJW).

Cackling Goose: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

Canada Goose: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant and resident.

Mute Swan: Two on a pond at Wyuka Cem, Lincoln, 16 May were considered "exotic" (JK); their provenance is not known. Vagrant Mute Swans are not unprecedented, albeit usually imms, and this species may be the next added to the State List.

Trumpeter Swan: The 27 at CL during the winter departed around 10 Mar; they were present 9 Mar (JR) but gone 13 Mar (JR), although 3 juvs re-appeared briefly 14 Mar (JR). The pair that began breeding near Ravenna in 2011 and has bred there since had returned 30 Mar (LR, RH).

Tundra Swan: The only report was of an imm with the Trumpeter Swans at CL 9 Mar (JR); it presumably departed with them around 10 Mar.

Wood Duck: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Gadwall: The 1003 in Lancaster Co 1 Apr (LE) was a good tally; high counts are 1750-2600. The hybrid Gadwall x Mallard, known as Brewer's Duck, was reported twice this spring, the 4th and 5th Nebraska records, all five by the same observer (JGJ). One was in Butler Co 15 Mar and the other in Clay Co 3 May.

American Wigeon: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

American Black Duck: Usually looked for in fall flocks of Mallards, there were a surprising 4 reported this spring. A pair in Sarpy Co 22-23 Mar consisted of a Black Duck fem and an apparent hybrid (with Mallard) male; the latter had some greenish feathering on its head (RW, JR). A fem was in southeastern Washington Co 4 Mar (JR), and a male was in Howard Co 23 Mar (LR, RH). The latter was westerly; there are only 3 records west of Grand Island.

Mallard: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide winter visitor and migrant.

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring migrant and summer resident.

Cinnamon Teal: Reports of 7 birds in the west 4 Apr-3 May were expected (WF, TJW, KD), but a male in western Seward Co 20 May (GR) was easterly.

Northern Shoveler: The 3000 at CL 10 Apr (JR) was 3rd-highest spring count on record, after 3700 and 3300.

Northern Pintail: A probable hybrid with Mallard was in Dakota Co 23 Mar (BFH).

Green-winged Teal: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

Canvasback: Rather late were singles in Sarpy Co 17 May (JM) and Burt Co 19 May (LE); 4 at LO 18-21 May (JGJ) were also tardy, but not far from the western Sandhills breeding range. Late dates are 21-23 May away from the Sandhills.

Redhead: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Ring-necked Duck: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Greater Scaup: One at LO 18-21 May JGJ) was tardy; there are only 5 later dates and 2 summer records. Most are gone by 10 May.

Lesser Scaup: The 2546 in Lancaster Co 20 Mar (LE) was a good count; highs are 2880-3650. This species often lingers into Jun; last for the spring period were 2 in Hall Co 25 May (LR, RH).

Surf Scoter: An imm male on Lewis & Clark L, Cedar Co, 12 Apr (DT) is only the 9th documented spring record and 2nd for Apr; scoters are rare in spring.

Long-tailed Duck: None were reported; this is a rare but essentially annual statewide spring migrant.

Bufflehead: The latest reports for spring were westerly, the last 21 May at LO (JGJ; m.ob.), as one might expect for a species nearing its breeding locations; however, this species breeds in Canada, with only one breeding record for Nebraska. There are about 21 summer records.

Common Goldeneye: Hybrids with Hooded Merganser have been reported several times in Nebraska, although repeat sightings of only 4-5 individuals may have been involved. A male hybrid at BOL 8 Mar, Nebraska's 10th record, was attempting courtship with "lots of desire and effort, but little in the way of impressive outcomes" (JGJ). Perhaps only an unimpressive effort is enough to produce a hybrid clutch.

Hooded Merganser: Numbers were first reported in late Mar: 20 at CL on 19 Mar (JR) and 22 at FF 26 Mar (CNK). Rare in winter, spring arrival begins in late Feb as water generally opens up. Two were in Sarpy Co 9 Mar (L&BP).

Common Merganser: Reports from late May into summer at LO are becoming the norm; mid-Jun through Jul sightings are likely molt migrants, but late May-early Jun sightings are of lingering birds. There are only 2 documented breeding records for the state.

Red-breasted Merganser: A male at Whitney L, Dawes Co, 24 May (NV) was only the 6th spring record after mid-May; there are very few summer records.

Ruddy Duck: Reports were routine for this locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Northern Bobwhite: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern and southern resident, extending westward in several river valleys.

Gray Partridge: None were reported of this currently rather rare inhabitant of northeast and north-central Nebraska.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine for this locally common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine for this locally common resident in northern and western Nebraska.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: A fem was early on a lek in Franklin Co 9 Mar (LR, RH); males start displaying as much as a month earlier than females. Easterly outposts continue: 2-6 were at SCP 22 Mar-1 Apr (EB, LE), and good numbers were reported from Buckskin WMA, Dixon Co, where 3 leks were found with 23 birds in all 29 Mar (MB, EBr) and 7 birds 23 Mar (BFH).

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Pacific Loon: Nebraska's 6th spring record was of a first summer bird at PL 3 May (MW, details). Most of the 70 or so records are in summer and fall.

Common Loon: One at HCR 25 Mar (CNK) was rather early; early dates are 21-22 Mar. An alternate-plumaged bird was tardy in Sarpy Co 26 May (SMa); there is another record 31 May.

Pied-billed Grebe: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring migrant.

Horned Grebe: A basic-plumaged bird at BOL 11-12 Mar (LE) was rather early; early dates are 8-9 Mar.

Eared Grebe: Another early grebe was the Eared at CBL 15 Mar (LE); early dates are 11-13 Mar.

Western Grebe: A rather amazing estimate based on "a few birds per acre" was the 100,000 at LM 23 Apr (RE); although possible on this 35,000-acre lake, there may have been a few birdless acres scattered around, as, by comparison, the high fall count is 44,000 for this well-known fall staging area.

Clark's Grebe: None were reported; this is an uncommon western migrant.

Double-crested Cormorant: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

American White Pelican: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring migrant.

American Bittern: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

Least Bittern: None were reported; this is an uncommon spring migrant in the southeast and Sandhills.

Great Blue Heron: Existing colonies are generally occupied by late Mar; birds were on nests at LO 27 Mar (TJW).

Great Egret: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern spring migrant, rare westward.

Snowy Egret: There were 9 reports statewide involving 16 birds, 8 of these at Saline Wetlands, Lincoln, 3 May (MW). Rather early were 2 in Douglas Co 18 Apr (JR); early dates are 10-14 Apr.

Little Blue Heron: Three were reported of this uncommon spring migrant. Rather early was one in Douglas Co 6 Apr (DSt); early dates are 4-5 Apr. The other reports were of singles at FF 25 Apr (EB, PS) and an ad at PP 30 Apr-5 May (LE; m.ob.).

Cattle Egret: One at BOL 30 Mar (BP) tied for third-earliest on record by 4 days.

Green Heron: Different singles were westerly in Lincoln Co 2 and 3 May (TJW).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: This species is a rare spring migrant, mostly in the southeast, where a sub-ad was at Jack Sinn 21 Apr (MW). Elsewhere it is less than annual; one was at Broken Bow SL 7 May (TH).

Glossy Ibis: This species has been found almost every spring starting in 2005, and there were a further 6 reports this spring: singles were at Jack Sinn 20 Apr (GR), in Scotts Bluff Co 27 Apr (KD, JJ) and likely the same bird 10 May (KD, AK), PL 5-9 May (JK, m.ob.), Frontier Co 14-16 May (TJW, m.ob.), and Seward Co 16 May (KS).

White-faced Ibis: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Turkey Vulture: Rather early were singles over FF 8 Mar (fide CNK) and Bellevue 9 Mar (CNK); most arrive in mid-Mar but early dates are at the end of Feb.

Osprey: One at HCR 28-29 Mar (TJW, SQ) was rather early; early dates are 19-22 Mar. One of 3 at Summit L, Burt Co, 2 May carried a blue marker indicative of the South Dakota stocking program (SSc); nesting was attempted there for the first time in 2013 and the same marked bird was present then as well.

Mississippi Kite: The resident birds at Ogallala appeared 4 May (JO), with 3 there by 21 May (JGJ); breeding occurs in McCook also, where one was seen 15 May (RB fide TJW). One in Alliance 22 Apr (RE) was about the 8th-earliest on record, and in a potential breeding location, but one in Hamilton Co 26 May (LR, RH) was easterly for spring.

Bald Eagle: An impressive number of migrants flew over FF 13 Mar, when a total of 234 were counted in 2 ½ hours, including one kettle of 45 (CNK). The only higher spring tally was the 800 at Calamus Res 24 Mar 2010.

Northern Harrier: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Northern Goshawk: There were 3 reports of this rare migrant: one in Buffalo Co 25 Mar (CS), one in Dakota Co 29 Mar (MB, EBr) and another in Douglas Co 12 Apr (CNK).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Singles, possibly the same bird, were over FF 16 (RSt) and 17 (ARy) May; breeding is sporadic at this location.

Broad-winged Hawk: Breeding probably occurs every year in the Missouri River Valley, but actual nest reports are scarce. This year a pair was nesting at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha where a fem was incubating 13 May (GD). Another pair was nesting in Mandan Park, Omaha, 21 May (CNK), and one was collecting sticks in Bellevue 6 May, although a nest was not seen (L&BP). Another some distance away in Bellevue was seen for the third time in a week 6 May, suggestive of local nesting (ARy). Late May reports likely also indicate breeding; singles were at Hummel Park, Omaha, 24 and 27 May (BP, CNK) and at PSP 30 May (MB). The only westerly report was of one in Frontier Co 14-15 May (TJW, JGJ) and another at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 16 May (RT).

Swainson's Hawk: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring migrant, uncommon east.

Red-tailed Hawk: Two nests with incubation under way were found in Sarpy Co 5 Mar (JLL); most incubation is initiated by 10 Mar in the east. Last "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk reported was 5 Apr in Douglas Co (CNK); latest dates for this form are 17-20 Apr. Last "Krider's" Red-tailed Hawk reported was 4 Apr in Lancaster Co (JK), although there were later reports 8 and 18 May in Clay Co of a pale bird that might have been an introgressant with "Eastern" Red-tailed Hawk and a "pure enough" "Krider's" Red-tailed Hawk in Seward Co 21 May (JK). The status of "Krider's" Red-tailed Hawk as a breeding bird needs clarification; it is believed to nest in extreme northern and northwestern Nebraska and intergrades with "Eastern" Red-taileds occur. These May sightings suggest that occasional birds that resemble phenotypic "Krider's" Red-tailed Hawk may occur as far southeast as Clay and Seward Cos during the breeding season. Unusual for Red-taileds was the congregation of 50-100 in a field being disked in Dawson Co 23 Mar (LR, RH).

Ferruginous Hawk: Reports were routine for this uncommon western resident.

Rough-legged Hawk: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide winter visitor.

Golden Eagle: Two were reported in the extreme east: a sub-ad over Omaha 15 Mar (SMa, pics) and an ad in Sarpy Co 9 Mar (CNK). Few ads move this far east.

Yellow Rail: The only report of this presumably regular but hard to find migrant through the east was of one flushed at Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co, 15 May (SB). Of a total of only 18 spring records, 12 are in the period 26 Apr-15 May.

Virginia Rail: The 7 near Fremont 18 May (RMa) were likely migrants, although breeding can occur in suitable places almost anywhere in the state.

Sora: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

American Coot: The 6000 at CL 10 Apr (JR) set a new spring high count record; previous high was 4500. One that decided to perch about 25 ft up in a cherry tree in downtown Omaha for about an hour in the late morning 21 Apr (DSt) may have been trying to escape the CL crowd.

Sandhill Crane: Reports in the east are becoming more numerous since 2001, when it was considered only "casual" (less than annual, *Birds of Nebraska*). This spring there were 8 reports 9 Mar-5 Apr, mostly of flocks containing up to 35 birds (MW, CNK, m.ob.).

Common Crane: This year's set of sightings involved one found just north of I-80 and west of Highway 183 in Buffalo Co 2 Apr (KS), where it was seen by many through 7 Apr, when it moved just south of the Platte River to Phelps Co for 2 days, 8-9 Apr (SG, CC, LS, fide MB) and then was found again in its Buffalo Co spot 11 Apr (JR). This is the 15th record of this species; there is some debate as to how many individual birds are involved. It has occurred annually from 2007 through 2012, but was not reported in 2013.

Whooping Crane: Not all sightings are reported, due to the endangered status of the species, but 5 reports came to hand of up to 7 birds 29 Mar-13 Apr (m.ob.) in expected locations during the usual migration period. Surprising were two in Jefferson Co 5-21 May (RTe, JGJ); one-year-old birds sometimes linger and do not complete spring migration.

Black-bellied Plover: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

American Golden-Plover: One still in "mostly basic" plumage was early at Jack Sinn 20 Mar (MW); there are only 5 earlier dates. Few were reported of this often-abundant spring migrant; there were only about 50 in the expected period 7-25 May (m.ob.).

Snowy Plover: The only report was of one in western Seward Co 18 May (JGJ); this is a rare spring visitor mostly to the RWB, averaging about one record each year.

Semipalmated Plover: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Piping Plover: Migrants are only rarely reported; singles were at PL 25 Apr (MW) and 3 May (MW) and in Frontier Co 14-16 May (TJW, PH). Most reports were from known breeding locations: L McConaughy, max 2 (JGJ, TG); lower Platte River, max 5 (m.ob.); Lewis and Clark L, max 10 (SSu); and GPD reach, max 15 (AM, DT). Total counts at these locations are likely higher.

Killdeer: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

Mountain Plover: First arrivals reported were 2 in Kimball Co 1 Apr (LS); early dates are 24-26 Mar. Only 6 additional birds were reported through 24 May, all in Kimball Co (KD, WF, JJ, MW).

Black-necked Stilt: One in Jefferson Co 4 Apr (SMa) was not only easterly, but the earliest spring date on record by 5 days.

American Avocet: Eastern records have become the norm in recent years, underscored by counts of 177 in Lancaster Co 21 Apr (LE) and 95 at LBN 25 Apr (JGJ). Oddly for what is considered a "western" bird, the 3 highest statewide spring counts on record (303-700) are from Niobrara and the RWB eastward.

Spotted Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Solitary Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Greater Yellowlegs: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Willet: As with American Avocet, this species has become more numerous in the east in recent years; 30 were at LBN 4 May (SMa), and good RWB counts were 47 on 13 May (JGJ) and 44 at Hansen WPA, Clay Co, 3 May (JGJ). Nebraska Willets are of the western subspecies *Tringa semipalmata inornatus*, as observed with singles at PL 8 and 11 May (JK).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Upland Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Whimbrel: There were reports from 5 locations, notably the Tamora area, western Seward Co, where up to 5 were present 16-20 May (KS, TG, MW, GR), as well as southwestern Kimball Co, where 7 were found 25 Apr (GW, WK). Singles were in Perkins Co 10 May (AW), near York 15 May (JGJ), and at LO 21 May (JGJ). Peak numbers generally occur mid- May.

Long-billed Curlew: The 25 in the North Platte area 15 Apr (TJW) was a good tally; high count is 30.

Hudsonian Godwit: One in Sarpy Co 31 Mar (L&BP) was earliest on record by 6 days; early dates are 6-7 Apr. Good counts were the 317 in the eastern RWB 13 May (JGJ) and the 234 in one Seward Co "puddle" 20 May (JK).

Marbled Godwit: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide spring migrant, less common eastward.

Ruddy Turnstone: More than usual were reported, including an amazing record concentration of 100+ near Tamora, Seward Co, 16 May (KS). Previous highs were in the 40s. As is typical of this species, spring migration occupied a narrow window; all 14 reports were in the period 13-21 May (m.ob.).

Stilt Sandpiper: One at Jack Sinn 1 Apr (MW, details) was record early by 2 days. Generally the first arrivals are in late Apr.

Sanderling: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Dunlin: Best count was 50 near Tamora 16 May (KS); high counts are 70-400.

Baird's Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Best tally was the 2500 in the eastern RWB 13 May (JGJ); high counts there are 4000-7000.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Three in Dodge Co 25 May (LE) were rather late; latest dates are 27-28 May.

Pectoral Sandpiper: One at Jack Sinn 15 Mar (LE) was rather early; early dates are 4-13 Mar.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Best count was the 2000+ in the eastern RWB 13 May (JGJ); high one-day tallies there are 3300-3500.

Western Sandpiper: There were 8 reports involving at least 16 birds 26 Apr-16 May (m.ob.), including a good count of 11 in Lancaster Co 13 May (LE). Singles were at Broken Bow SL 26 Apr, 1 and 9 May (TH), in Butler Co 2 May (WF), in Fillmore Co 3 May (JGJ), in Sarpy Co 9 May (EB), and in Seward Co 16 May (LE).

Short-billed Dowitcher: The 4 in eastern Douglas Co 24 Apr (JT) were rather early; previous early dates were 25-27 Apr, although there are documented records for 16 and 20 Apr. Most pass through in May; the remaining 13 reports were in the period 10-20 May, involving some 50 birds (m.ob.).

Best count was 24 in the eastern RWB 13 May (JGJ); high counts are 89-140.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

American Woodcock: Reports were routine for this uncommon easterly migrant and summer resident.

Wilson's Phalarope: One "swimming in circles" in Hall Co 28 Mar (SQ) was 3rd-earliest on record; earlier dates are 18 and 23 Mar. Huge numbers congregate at favored locations in spring; 5000+ were at Swan L, Holt Co, 14 May (D&JP). High counts are 6550-10,000.

Red-necked Phalarope: This species is rare in the east, but 1-2 were in Seward Co 16-20 May (LE, L&BP, MW, GR), and one was in southeastern Washington Co 17 May (L&BP).

Bonaparte's Gull: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Laughing Gull: A second cycle bird at CL 27-29 May (JR, BP, MW) is the 6th spring record. In addition there are 14 more records in summer and fall.

Franklin's Gull: The 5000 at LBN 20 Apr (TJW) was 4rd-highest spring count on record, after counts of "tens of thousands", 12,592 and 6000.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant.

California Gull: Although the prairie-breeding subspecies *Larus californicus albertaensis* breeds as far southeast as the Dakotas, easterly reports of California Gull in Nebraska are scarce, and most records are of ads. This spring, however, reports were indicative of a surprising influx of ads, imms, and first-winter birds. Many of the reports, unfortunately, were not supported by unequivocal photographs, especially showing birds in flight. Good photos were provided of a 2nd-cycle bird first seen at CL 13 Mar (JR); presumably the same bird was reported through 12 Apr (JR, SMa, GR). An ad was in Dakota Co 20 Mar (BFH), one was in Sarpy Co 3 Apr (CNK), and an ad was at PL 5 May (MW photo, JK). A first winter bird was at CL 29 Mar (JR, SMa photo) and presumably the same bird was there through 4 Apr (JR). Intriguing were reports of as many as 15 first-year birds at NP Dodge Park, Omaha, 2-6 Apr; photos submitted to document this important event were, however, not conclusive, although circumstantial evidence in favor included the several reports of older age classes as well as the appearance of increased numbers of Thayer's Gulls and an imm Glaucous-winged Gull at NP Dodge Park (see that species). Identification of California Gulls can be challenging and observers are encouraged to provide photos of birds observed in the east; flight photos are most useful for first cycle birds.

Herring Gull: Ads are scarce after Apr; record late for an ad was one at LM 19 May (JGJ).

Thayer's Gull: This species is an uncommon statewide migrant, but more than expected appeared in the east. About 13 were reported, with a peak count of 6 (5 first-winter, one 3rd winter) at CL 25 Mar (JR, m.ob.). Two late singles were reported; understandably, one with a broken leg was at LBN 20 Apr (TJW), but a juv at LM 23 Apr (RE) was 2nd-latest on record for

spring. Single ads were at BOL 12 Mar (LE) and in Cedar Co 21 Mar (MB, photo).

Iceland Gull: Continuing the influx in numbers and species of gulls in the east, 3 Iceland ("Kumlien's") gulls unexpectedly provided the 5th-7th spring records for the state. An ad was videotaped at BOL 22 Mar (JGJ) and remained until 28 Mar (MW, LE, DL), but was replaced by a first winter bird there 29 Mar (CNK, GR, SMa). A 3rd-winter bird was at CL 24-27 Mar (SMa, JGJ, JR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Continuing to increase in numbers as a migrant, most commonly in the east, 16 were reported statewide 9 Mar (MW) through 19 Apr (m.ob.); 4 were at NP Dodge Park, Omaha, 2-4 Apr (JR) and 4 also were at LM 27 Mar (TJW).

Glaucous-winged Gull: A "notably small and small-billed" (RW) juv bird appeared with the mixed flock of gulls at N. P. Dodge Park, Omaha, 2-4 Apr (JR, RW, NA, CNK, L&BP). This is Nebraska's 4th documented record, all of which are in the period Dec-Apr.

Glaucous Gull: There was no influx of this species; only 2 were reported 25-27 Mar (CNK, TJW), along with a Glaucous x Herring bird ("Nelson's Gull") at NP Dodge Park, Omaha, 3 Apr (RW).

Great Black-backed Gull: A first year bird put in a brief appearance at NP Dodge Park, Omaha, 5 Apr (JR, details), providing Nebraska's 7th spring record, 24th in all.

Least Tern: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant, absent from the Panhandle.

Caspian Tern: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

Black Tern: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Common Tern: There were 5 reports statewide 29 Apr-31 May (m.ob), involving 11 birds, a good showing for this uncommon migrant.

Forster's Tern: The 104 at PL 11 May (JK) was a good count; highs are 132-228.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: There were 4 reports: 1-2 were in Grand Island 12-17 Apr (AC), one was in Gering 27 Apr (RSg), one was in Ogallala 30 Apr (JO), and one was in Gothenburg 10 May at the same place as last year (J&JH).

Mourning Dove: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Only two of this declining species were reported: singles at WP 21 May (LE) and in York Co 31 May (LE).

Greater Roadrunner: Yet another intriguing report, this by an observer experienced with the species, was of one crossing Ravenna Road some 6-8 miles north of Highway 30, in Buffalo Co 2 Mar (BA). There have been recent records in Yuma Co, CO, adjacent to Nebraska, and in Lawrence, KS, where one wintered 1999-2000. *Birds of Kansas* says that outlying sightings are generally in fall and winter, like the Lawrence bird, and of course this most recent March 2 sighting from Nebraska. Another purported Nebraska

sighting was near Funk 29 Mar 2004, which could also be considered a winter sighting (this record was judged inconclusive by the NOU Records Committee due to lack of detail). As yet there are no documented records for Nebraska; this Buffalo Co sighting will be submitted to the NOU Records Committee.

Barn Owl: None were reported of this uncommon migrant statewide, rare east, and summer resident south, rare north and east.

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Snowy Owl: Following an average winter with 6 reports, the 3 reports were not unexpected: 2 were near LM 8 Mar (PP fide TJW), one was in Dawson Co 10 Mar (KPe), and one was at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 12 Mar (ML fide JGJ).

Burrowing Owl: Reports were routine for this common western migrant and summer resident.

Barred Owl: One was incubating 3 eggs in a western Douglas Co nest box 5 Mar (DSt); this is an early date for this box and for the state. The range is slowly expanding westward along the Republican River; one at Narrows WMA, Webster Co, 14 May (WF) is the 2nd-westernmost record there, about 7 miles east of a record near Riverton, Franklin Co.

Long-eared Owl: One roosting in conifers in Cedar Co 20 Apr (SSu) was likely a winter visitor nearing departure; egg dates are in early April, but migrants are still moving through in mid-Apr.

Short-eared Owl: There were about 15 reported, none that appeared to be on territory, through 21 Apr (m.ob.); egg dates are Apr-May.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: After the amazing survey results of 2010 by Bart Bly and co-workers, which estimated some 48 breeding pairs in the pinewoods areas of western Nebraska, Wayne Mollhoff erected a few nest boxes in likely places in the surveyed area. On 17 Apr he found 5 eggs in a box in the Wildcat Hills in Scotts Bluff Co; there were 4 young on 10 May. This is the first documented nesting for the state (WM). An apparently fledged juv was at the nest box 25 May (MW, AK). Calling birds were heard in the cedar canyons in Lincoln Co 26 Apr (TJW), and one present in a Kearney park for at least a few days through 19 Mar was recorded (DA). Breeding seems likely in Lincoln Co, but the Kearney bird seems more likely to be a migrant; it is not known whether calling occurs prior to birds leaving winter roost sites, but apparently calling does not occur during migration.

Common Nighthawk: The significant difference in arrival times between the western and eastern subspecies was illustrated by the first reported arrivals at opposite ends of the state this spring: one was over Omaha 6 May (JR) and one was in Scotts Bluff Co 29 May (AD).

Common Poorwill: First reported were rather early on 26 Apr, both in Lincoln Co cedar canyons (TJW) and in Custer Co (TH). Early dates are 22-25 Apr.

Chuck-will's-widow: First reported was 3 May near Rulo (CNK); early dates are 23-29 Apr. Reports were from Nemaha, Richardson, and Pawnee Cos (WF, fide MB, TG, MW).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: Arrival was about on time: singles were in the Omaha-Bellevue area 24 Apr (EBe, RS), and 8-9 were at ICSP the next day (JR). Early dates are 15-18 Apr.

Chimney Swift: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident, less common west.

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine for this fairly common migrant and uncommon summer resident in the Panhandle.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: All but one of the reports were from the east, as expected, the earliest one was in Bellevue 27 Apr (L&BP), perhaps a little later than usual.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: Nebraska's first documented spring record was of one photographed in Dawes Co 22 May (JW). There are a few additional spring records, none documented, for this species, which migrates north just to the west of Nebraska.

Hummingbird sp.: Because Ruby-throated Hummingbird is rare in the west, spring sightings of hummers there are of interest. Recent years have seen increasing reports of Ruby-throats migrating through and even summering in the Panhandle, and Black-chinned Hummingbird has reached Nebraska in the last few years. At least 3 different birds showed up this spring in the observer's yard in southern Scotts Bluff Co 27 May-20 Jun (AK). Rufous coloration was not mentioned, and so it seems likely that these were indeed *Archilocus* hummers.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Lewis's Woodpecker: The small population in lower Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, will likely continue for 2014; 3 ads were there 26 May (MW). Early dates for the species are 1-5 May.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Wintering occurs most years in the southeast; in winter 2013-2014, "many were wintering in oak bottoms" (JR). Migrants arrived in early May: 12 were at WGP 6 May, where none were present 3-4 May (JWH). First reported in the west was one in Scotts Bluff Co 19 May (AK).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: A male appeared in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 26 Apr after being absent during the winter, and 2 were there 3 May (KD); presumably these are the pair that summered in the yard in 2011 and 2013. It would be interesting to know where these presumably non-migratory birds wintered.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern migrant, rare westward.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: The fem of the Rocky Mountains subspecies continued in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 12-17 May (KD).

Northern Flicker: A "Red-shafted Flicker" was easterly and a bit tardy in Sarpy Co 5 Apr (CNK); there are later dates in the east 6, 10, and 13 Apr and 3 May.

Pileated Woodpecker: One was at Flathead WMA, Jefferson Co, 3 May where one was seen in spring 2013 (JGJ). Along with Barred Owl expanding in riparian corridors in the same general area, it might be expected that such westward range expansions will continue. In Kansas a similar phenomenon has been noted, attributed to recovery and maturation of riparian woodlands

westward in the absence of fire (CO, PJ) and to drought killing larger trees and providing substrate for wood-boring insect larvae (fide WRS).

American Kestrel: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Merlin: Four were identified to subspecies, all singles of the expected wintering form *Falco columbarius richardsonii*, through 11 Apr (JK, EB, RW). Last was seen 3 May at FF (JR), unidentified to subspecies; last dates for migrants are around 20 May.

Peregrine Falcon: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant and local eastern resident.

Prairie Falcon: Easterly was one at Bellevue 16 Apr (EB).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern migrant, rare west.

Western Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine for this common western migrant and summer resident.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine for this common eastern migrant and summer resident.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Two were reported, both on what would be new early dates for the species (6, 7 May); neither was accompanied by convincing details, and one was listed by the observer as "possible" only. I consider these reports undocumented.

Acadian Flycatcher: One at Rulo, Richardson Co, 3 May (CNK) was rather early; early dates are 1-2 May. The 13 reports, involving 15-20 birds, 3-31 May (m.ob.) were all from Douglas Co southward in the Missouri River Valley except for one calling at WP 31 May (MW). Best count was 6 at ICSP 29 May (MW).

Alder Flycatcher: Rather early were 2 in Omaha 7 May (JR), 2 at FF 10 May (GR) and one at WP 10 May (LE); early dates are 6-7 May.

Willow Flycatcher: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern migrant, uncommon west, and uncommon statewide summer resident.

Least Flycatcher: Two at ICSP 26 Apr (JR) and one in Lincoln the same day (RSt) were rather early; early dates are 22-24 Apr. Best count was the 25 at FF 5 May (EB); high counts are 50-54.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: The two reports were from the breeding range: singles in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 26 May (MW) and Chadron SP, Dawes Co, 27 May (TG). Expansion eastward to Dawes Co has occurred only in the last 25 years or so.

Eastern Phoebe: The 22 in Douglas, Sarpy, and Cass Cos 3 Apr (RW) was 3rd-highest for spring; highest are 50 and "a few dozen". One in Richardson Co 11 Mar (LF, SQ) was rather early; early dates are 4-8 Mar in the south and east.

Say's Phoebe: Easterly records are few and mostly north of Polk Co; this spring one was in Cedar Co 4 Apr (DT) and another in Polk Co 12 Apr (MN).

Great Crested Flycatcher: Arrival was on the early side; 3 were at FF 25 Apr (EB) and 3 were at ICSP 26 Apr (JR). Early dates in the east are 20-22 Apr.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine for this fairly common western migrant.

Western Kingbird: Rather early in the west were singles in Lincoln Co 24 Apr (TJW), Perkins Co 26 Apr (AW), and Scotts Bluff Co 27 Apr (KD). Early dates are 22-25 Apr.

Eastern Kingbird: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: The 5 reports were of singles, the earliest 2 of which were males. One at Jack Sinn 21 Apr (MW) was rather early; early dates are 14-19 Apr. Other singles were in Saline Co 24 Apr (JPK), Richardson Co 3 May (CNK), Knox Co 9 May (J&LS), one of few northerly reports, and Lincoln Co 25-26 May (JA). This species now occurs each spring, usually in the southeast and south-central.

Loggerhead Shrike: A rather late nest with 5 eggs was in Kimball Co 21 May (WM).

Northern Shrike: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

White-eyed Vireo: Recent years have seen an increase in sightings of this still-rare bird; 3 were reported this spring: singles were at ICSP 26 Apr (EB), in PP 1 May (MW), and in Boyd Co 11 May (MB). Interestingly, none of these were in Douglas and Sarpy Cos; previously there had been only 10 records outside Douglas and Sarpy Cos since 1981.

Bell's Vireo: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern migrant and summer resident.

Plumbeous Vireo: Reports were routine for this uncommon western migrant and summer resident.

Blue-headed Vireo: Rather early were singles at ICSP 26 Apr (JR, heard only) and FF 28 Apr (MUs). Early dates are 21-23 Apr.

Warbling Vireo: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Philadelphia Vireo: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern migrant, rare central.

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine for this common eastern migrant, uncommon west, and common statewide summer resident.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported of this fairly common western winter irruptive and uncommon and secretive western summer resident.

Steller's Jay: The last reported of the small number (3-7) that wintered in Scotts Bluff Co was one there 13 Mar (AK).

Blue Jay: A nest 10 ft up in a Honey Locust 28 Apr (LE) was a bit on the early side.

Black-billed Magpie: Reports continue in the northeast; 4 were at the "usual spot" near GPD 7 and 18 Mar (RD), and one was west of Winnebago, Thurston Co, 19 May (WF). Apart from 2 in southwest Nuckolls Co 23 Mar (JGJ), reports were from Scotts Bluff Co, where up to 6 were at Winters Creek through the period (KD, AD), and 4 others were reported at different sites 26 Apr and 3 May (KD), and from Sioux Co, where 2 in Smiley Canyon 23 Apr were the only ones seen on a 2-day western Nebraska trip 23-24 Apr (RE).

American Crow: This species shows marked migratory tendencies on the Great Plains, where spring migrants are conspicuous mid-Mar; 55 flew north over FF 13 Mar (CNK).

Horned Lark: Reports were routine for this common statewide winter visitor and abundant statewide migrant.

Purple Martin: Two at Alma 30 Mar (MW) were rather early; early dates, mostly male "scouts" are 12-15 Mar.

Tree Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Violet-green Swallow: Two in Scotts Bluff Co 27 Apr (KD) were rather early; early dates are 23-26 Apr.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Bank Swallow: Singles in Lancaster Co 5 Apr (SMa) and Sarpy Co 7 Apr (fide WRS) were rather early; early dates are (were) 3-6 Apr.

Cliff Swallow: 4 in Lincoln Co 9 Apr (LD) were rather early; early dates are 4-6 Apr.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Tufted Titmouse: Reports were routine for this common eastern resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Intriguing activity was noted at Holmes L, Lincoln, where 2 had wintered (LE); this pair was investigating a likely nest hole in an ash tree 9-18 Apr, and at least one was still present 30 Apr and 11 May (LE). Territorial behavior in Apr-May (and later into summer) has been observed before in eastern Nebraska, but there are no records of successful breeding. Most wintering birds depart by late May.

White-breasted Nuthatch: This species breeds in the east and westward throughout major river valleys with large trees and on the Pine Ridge (different subspecies), and is generally absent in summer elsewhere. In winter, however, most of the state is occupied. Thus singles in Custer and Logan Cos 4 Apr (WF) and in Kimball Co 5 Apr (WF) were likely wintering there. Two at Bridgeport 19 Apr (JGJ) may have been residents or wintering birds.

Pygmy Nuthatch: Reports were routine for this fairly common western resident.

Brown Creeper: This species breeds at FF in small numbers; one was singing there 18 Apr (JR) and another was seen 17 May (DC). Wintering birds are generally gone by 1 May. The 5 at a single Cass Co site 23 Mar (RE) was a good count; high for spring is 9.

Rock Wren: One in Lincoln Co 6 Apr (TJW) was rather early; early dates are 2-6 Apr. One that perched on the car mirror to check out the observer (LB) in Phelps Co 24 Apr was a bit easterly.

House Wren: Singles at FF 11 Apr (EB) and in Harlan Co 12 Apr (LR, RH) were rather early; early dates are 5-7 Apr in the east.

Winter Wren: One in an eastern Cherry Co Sandhills yard 12 May (MSS) was tardy; late dates are 9-15 May.

Sedge Wren: Rather early were singles at FF 24 Apr (EB) and at Jack Sinn 25 Apr (JR); early dates are 18-20 Apr.

Marsh Wren: One at Jack Sinn 4 May was singing an eastern type song (JK); migrants at this site are likely all or mostly easterns, although western song-types have been reported in spring migration east to Butler Co (WF).

Carolina Wren: There were several reports from southern counties (CNK, LR, RH, JGJ) west to Frontier Co, where one was singing 15 May (TJW); reports were numerous from the east as expected, north to Cuming Co 20 May (LE) and northwest to Howard Co 10 May (LR, RH).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Three at WP 6 Apr (TG) were rather early, tying the early dates (3 other 6 Apr records). Arrival is later in the west, where earliest reported were in Lincoln Co 3 May (RL, TJW) and in Scotts Bluff Co 10 May (KD). Early dates in the west are 30 Apr-1 May. The 45 at ICSP 26 Apr (JR) was record high; previous high was 30. Nesting was underway at FF 5 May (EB), about on time.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: One in Sioux Co 26 May (MW) was tardy; late dates in the west are 28-29 May.

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and common eastern and central summer resident, uncommon west.

Mountain Bluebird: Two birds, a possible "pair", were reported near Gilman Canyon in Lincoln Co 17 May (J&JH); nesting has not been documented as yet in Lincoln Co, although the cedar canyons there are an important wintering area. It is likely this report is of late migrants.

Townsend's Solitaire: This species occurs most winters in the east, but probably not annually. Singles were reported at 3 locations in Lancaster Co: at Wagon Train L 6 Mar (TG), a few miles south of Lincoln 5 Apr (SMa), and in WP 6 Apr (TG).

Veery: Nine singles were reported in the east 7-18 May (m.ob.), a good showing. In the west, singles were in Sheridan Co 25 May (DV) and Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 29 May (MW). Eastern and western birds belong to different subspecies.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: As expected, all reports were from the east: 17 birds 6-19 May (m.ob.), about an average showing.

Swainson's Thrush: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Hermit Thrush: Since there were no reports of wintering birds in the southeast, where wintering has occurred, the several late Mar-early Apr reports this spring were likely early migrants. One at Nebraska City 10 Mar (SQ) may indeed have wintered, but 1-2 at PP 31 Mar-1 Apr (LE) may have been migrants, along with the remaining reports through 16 May, the latter at FF and rather late (MSt); late dates in the east are 17-21 May.

Wood Thrush: One at ICSP 26 Apr (JR) was rather early; early dates are 20-23 Apr.

American Robin: The 796 in Lancaster Co 7 Mar (LE) is 3rd-highest for spring; higher are counts of 1200 and 852. In early Mar the first yard birds separate from flocks and take up territories; one such was in Omaha 1 Mar (SMa).

Gray Catbird: Reports were routine for this common eastern and central migrant, uncommon west.

Northern Mockingbird: One that wintered in North Platte was still present 14 Mar (TJW). One in Lancaster Co 20 Mar (D&JP) was early, although it may have wintered in the area. Early dates are (were) 18-25 Mar.

Sage Thrasher: The 2 in southwestern Kimball Co 24 May (MW) provided only the 15th spring record for the state. The records are in the period 23 Mar-26 May in the western Panhandle.

Brown Thrasher: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

European Starling: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant and common summer resident.

American Pipit: The 4 at PL 17 Mar (LE) were rather early; early dates are 10-13 Mar.

Sprague's Pipit: None were reported; this species has been found when looked for in recent years at places like Spring Creek Prairie around 1 May.

Bohemian Waxwing: None were reported of this common but erratic western winter visitor and migrant.

Cedar Waxwing: There were several reports of dead waxwings in the east, possibly a result of cyanide poisoning from eating cotoneaster berries and crab apples, both of which contain cyanogenic glycosides that are stimulated to produce cyanide by unusually cold weather (JGJ; *Nebraskaland Magazine* May 2014).

Lapland Longspur: Reports were routine for this common winter visitor and abundant migrant.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Migrants can occur in large numbers, with high counts over 500, but a good tally was the 155 in Keith Co 17 Apr (JK).

Smith's Longspur: The 2 reports, involving 3 birds, were from SCP 29 Mar (JK, MW) and 1 Apr (2; LE).

McCown's Longspur: The 4 reports were from Kimball Co 5 Apr-21 May (KD, WF, JJ, WM). This species is a fairly common breeder in suitable short-grass habitat in the western Panhandle.

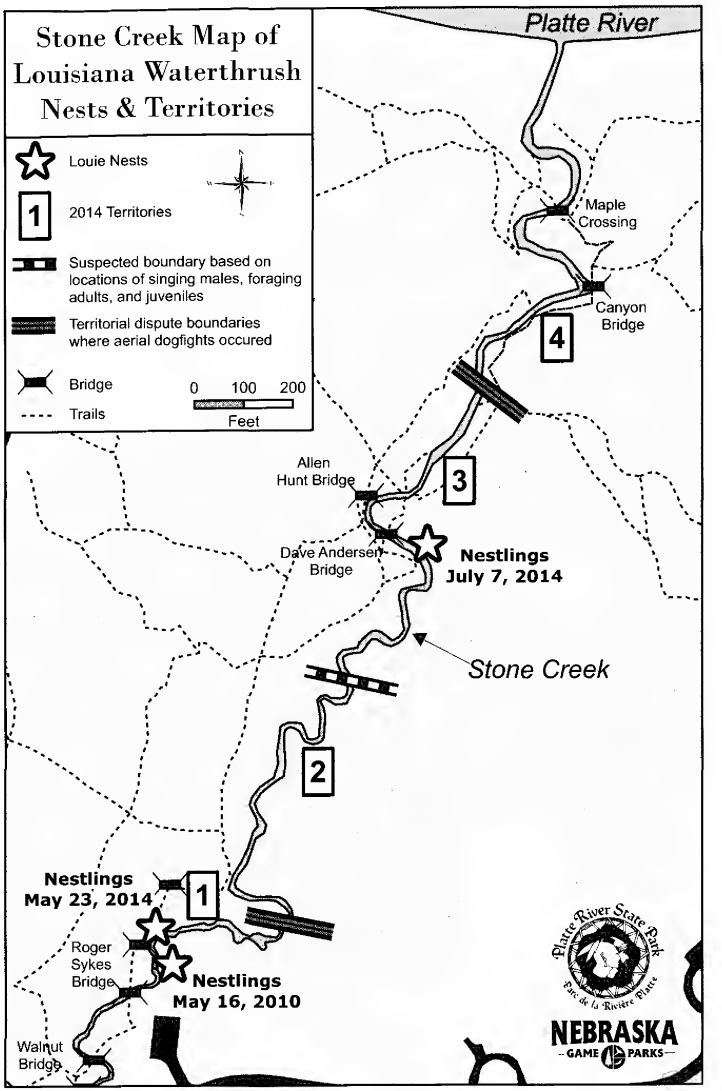
Snow Bunting: After the winter's fairly good showing, last reported were 4 at BOL through 8 Mar (JGJ, LE) and 2 at PL through 12 Mar (LE). These dates are rather late, as prior late dates were 10-12 Mar. There are only 3 isolated later dates through 23 Mar.

Ovenbird: One at ICSP 26 Apr (JR) was rather early; early dates are 22-24 Apr. Earliest reported in central Nebraska were singles at Ogallala 8 May (JO) and near North Platte 10 May (TJW).

Worm-eating Warbler: Rarely reported in recent years, one was at Riverside Park, Nebraska City, 13 May (JGi). There are about 50 spring records in all.

Louisiana Waterthrush: All reports were from regular locations in the east. The birds breeding along Stone Creek, PRSP, have been well-documented in recent years by John Carlini and Shari Schwartz; this year 3 territories had been established as early as 15 Apr and a fourth by 11 May, and ads were first noted feeding young 23 May. First arrival at PRSP was 13 Apr (TG).

Northern Waterthrush: One in Platte Co 26 May (MN) was rather late; late dates are 27-29 May.



Locations of Louisiana Waterthrush nests and 2014 territories along Stone Creek, Platte River State Park, as noted by John Carlini and Shari Schwartz. Map courtesy of Trisha Schlake of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Golden-winged Warbler: At least 12 were reported, all in the east as expected, 6-22 May (m.ob.). Prior to 1993 there were only about 30 spring records, but starting in 1993, there have been 4 years with 12 or more reported.

Blue-winged Warbler: This species also showed well, with 4 reports: singles were at WP 11 May (JC, SS), in Omaha 13 May (JR), at Hummel Park, Omaha, 17 May (m.ob.), and at ICSP 30 May (JR).

Black-and-white Warbler: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Prothonotary Warbler: Reports were more numerous than usual, including a pair occupying a nest box at Great Marsh, FF, beginning 14 May (EA, RBa photo) and continuing through the period. This appears to be only the 4th documented nesting at FF since 1970. There were reports of additional singles in FF at 3 additional locations (PS, BW, DT). Elsewhere, singles were at Towl Park, Omaha, 7-9 May (BP, NR, JR), Standing Bear L, Omaha, 10 May (AF), Nebraska City 11 May (JGJ), and at Heron Haven, Omaha, 13 May (BP).

Tennessee Warbler: This species is rare westerly; good finds were singles in Lincoln Co 10 May (TJW), Frontier Co 15 May (TJW), and Grant Co 21 May (JGJ). There are 40+ Panhandle spring records.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Nashville Warbler: One in Frontier Co 15 May (TJW) was westerly; there are few records from the west.

Connecticut Warbler: Usually only one or two are reported each spring. This year, singles were in eastern Douglas Co 22 May (JT) and at Hormel Park, Fremont, 22-23 May (JCr).

MacGillivray's Warbler: The only reports were of singles at LO 19 May (JGJ) and in Scotts Bluff Co 25 May (MW). This is an uncommon migrant in the west.

Mourning Warbler: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern migrant.

Kentucky Warbler: Most reports were from known summer locations: ICSP, FF, and PRSP (m.ob.). A surprise was a westerly migrant at Grand Island 25 May (LR, RH, SM), only the 14th in spring away from the Missouri River Valley. Possible migrants were singles at Rulo 3 May (CNK) and in Bellevue 9 May (KCR).

Common Yellowthroat: One in western Nebraska 23 Apr (RE) was rather early; early dates are 20-22 Apr.

Hooded Warbler: A surprising number were reported this spring; the 6 birds was the best spring number since the 7 in 2004. A fem at WGP 19-21 Apr (RS, PS, m.ob.) was 2nd-earliest on record; males were at FF 2 May (RG), Hickory Hills, Sarpy Co, 3 May (MWi), WP 5 May (DL), Otoe Co 13 May (JGi), and 2 were heard at ICSP 19 May by an observer experienced with the species (LA).

American Redstart: Reports were routine for this common eastern migrant, uncommon west.

Cape May Warbler: There were about 8 birds reported, a good showing for this rare migrant. Notable was a male that pleased many viewers at Towl Park,

Omaha, 9 May (JR, m.ob.); it remained a few days and may have been in the group of 3 there 11 May (SMa, m.ob.) and one of the 2 seen on 15 May (PR, KDy). A fem was seen by several NOU members at the Spring Meeting as it showed well near the Wetland Center at FF 17 May (BP, m.ob.). The others were singles in a Bellevue yard 4 May, rather early (KCR), at PL 11 May (JK, MW), and in Cedar Co 11 May (DT).

Cerulean Warbler: Three were reported, a "stunning, singing male" at WP 7 May (MW), one "back again" (CNK) at FF 10-15 May (CNK, GR, SB), and one at ICSP 19 May (LA).

Northern Parula: A male persisted in Scotts Bluff Co 3-21 May (KD, AD, AK, MS, photo), the 18th for the Panhandle in spring. Another westerly bird was in Ogallala 4 May (JO, photo). Best counts were as expected at ICSP: 11 there 26 Apr (JR) and 10 on 5 May (JGJ). High counts are 17-25.

Magnolia Warbler: There were a good number of reports from the east 6-23 May (m.ob.); the 5 at Nebraska City 11 May (JGJ) tied the third-highest spring count after the high of 7 (twice). Westerly was one in Perkins Co 2 May (AW). This species occurs westward with some regularity; there are 18 Panhandle records.

Bay-breasted Warbler: This spring was the best for the species in many years; usually it is about as rare in spring as Cape May Warbler. No fewer than 12 were reported, including 2 males and a fem on 17 May at FF (GR, m.ob.). There were 2 reports of 2 birds: in Riverside Park, Nebraska City, 13 May (JGi) and at Hormel Park, Fremont, 16 May (males, CNK). Other reports were of a male at WP 8 May (MW), one at FF 9 May (NF), one on the Sarpy Co Spring Count 10 May (CNK), a male at PL 11-16 May (JK, MW, LE), and one in a Bellevue yard 15 May (L&BP).

Blackburnian Warbler: Eight were reported 7-25 May (m.ob.), an average migration.

Yellow Warbler: One at WP 20 Apr (MW) was rather early; early dates in the east are 16-18 Apr.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: About 25 were reported 8-25 May (m.ob.), a better-than-average showing; all reports were from the east.

Blackpoll Warbler: This species is a fairly common statewide spring migrant, less so in the west; the 12 in western Nebraska 21-23 May (JGJ) was a typical western tally.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: This is a rare spring migrant statewide, with only 27 records in all prior to this spring, when there were a surprising 3 more: singles were in Sarpy Co 17 May (ARy), Washington Co 17 May (JJ), and at FF 18 May (fem, LE, details).

Palm Warbler: More than usual were reported, about 26 birds 22 Apr-20 May (m.ob.). The eastern subspecies *Setophaga palmarum hypochrysea*, with entirely yellowish (rather than white) underparts, is a rare migrant in the east; a careful observer decided that one of 3 birds in Pawnee Co 4 May was of the western subspecies *S. p. palmarum*, despite its almost completely yellowish underparts (TEL).

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: At the eastern edge of the expected migration corridor, singles were in Custer Co 20 Apr (LR, RH) and Lincoln Co 10 May (TJW).

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: A few attempt to overwinter in the southeast, but there are only about 20 records for Feb, and so early Mar sightings are likely migrants; 2 were in Platte Co 9 Mar (WF) and 2 at BOL 13 Mar (RSt). There are only 3 previous Mar dates prior to 9 Mar.

Yellow-throated Warbler: All reports were from FF, the only known breeding site; first reported was 15 Apr (JC, SS), and peak count was 3, on both 18 and 22 Apr (JR, RS).

Prairie Warbler: Only the 18th spring record was one at PL 11 May (JK, MW, details).

Townsend's Warbler: This species is rare in spring, but surprisingly, the only documented spring record is from the east, and all but 3 of the remaining 10 records for the state are from central Nebraska. A male was well seen in Platte Co 3 May; it was matched to a field guide description with the bird in view, but unfortunately, other than its gender, there was no description of the bird provided.

Black-throated Green Warbler: An average migration had about 9 birds reported 4-18 May in the east (m.ob.). Unexpected was one westerly in Kimball 20 May (JGJ), only the 3rd for the Panhandle; there is a single record for Keith Co.

Canada Warbler: Arrival was earlier than usual for this typically late migrant; singles were in a Bellevue yard 6 May (KCR) and at Hormel Park, Fremont, 8 May (GR). Most surprising was an even earlier bird in Scotts Bluff Co 4 May (AD, details), the first spring Panhandle report and only the 16th in spring away from the Missouri River Valley. In all, 9 were reported 4-25 Apr (m.ob.).

Wilson's Warbler: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Very recently there has been a moderate increase in easterly reports. It is not known which subspecies is involved; as of 2001 the eastern subspecies was thought to have been extirpated in the east (*Birds of Nebraska*). This spring no fewer than 3 were reported in the Missouri River Valley: singles in Omaha 16 May (EBe), southeast Washington Co 18 May (JR), and 2 at ICSP 30 May (JR).

Green-tailed Towhee: None of this rare Panhandle migrant were reported.

Spotted Towhee: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

Eastern Towhee: Some good counts in FF and at ICSP may have been a lingering effect of brush piles caused by the massive 2011 flood at those locations (JR); 16 were at FF 2 May (JR) and 12 at ICSP 26 Apr (JR). The apparent introgression of Eastern Towhee genes in Scotts Bluff Co was marked this spring by photos of eastern-like birds with minimal back spotting but singing eastern songs, as well as at least one phenotypically pure male in the observer's yard 12 May (KD).

American Tree Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide winter visitor and migrant.

Chipping Sparrow: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident and common migrant.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Brewer's Sparrow: The 8 near North Platte 15 Apr (TJW) were rather early; early dates are (were) 10-15 Apr.

Field Sparrow: One in Loup Co, central Nebraska, 19 Apr (MUs) was rather early there; early dates in the west are 15-20 Apr, but in the east begin 20 Mar.

Vesper Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Lark Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Lark Bunting: A surprise was a male in southeastern Washington Co 20 May (JJ); this is the 13th record since 1981 in the southeast.

Savannah Sparrow: Two in Lancaster Co 15 Mar (LE) were likely early migrants; early dates are 9-11 Mar.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One was rather early for the location in Loup Co 11 Apr (RK, RM); farther west, in the Panhandle, early dates are 27 Apr-1 May.

Baird's Sparrow: This species is probably a regular migrant through Nebraska, but is difficult to find and identify when not singing. There are only 14 documented spring records statewide 24 Apr-23 May. Intriguing this spring was a report of 2 in Otoe Co on the rather early date of 11 Apr (SQ, LF, details). Early date in Kansas for Baird's is 6 Apr, and in Nebraska early dates for the similar Grasshopper Sparrow are 26-31 Mar. Identifying silent Grasshopper and Baird's Sparrows can be challenging.

Henslow's Sparrow: This species is locally common, but only in a few favored locations. Burchard Lake SRA, Pawnee Co, and neighboring private prairie, as well as Pawnee Prairie WMA, Pawnee Co, and SCP are the most accessible sites. In the Burchard L SRA area 10-13 were found 29 May (WRS, CG, LN); 2-4 were on the SRA 31 May (MW, TG, photos).

Le Conte's Sparrow: None were reported of this fairly common eastern migrant.

Nelson's Sparrow: One at Jack Sinn 24 Apr (MW, details) was record early by a day.

Fox Sparrow: A grayish "Red" Fox Sparrow photographed in Morrill Co 18 Apr (AKF photo; fide JGJ) was the first record of this eastern subspecies for the Panhandle, although it had characteristics of the grayish birds intermediate between eastern and Rocky Mountain birds sometimes referred to as *Passerella iliaca altivagans*. There have been a few records in recent years of these grayish birds, which are likely to migrate through Nebraska.

Song Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Lincoln's Sparrow: One at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 8 Mar (MW, EA) was very early and possibly wintered.

Swamp Sparrow: One that wintered at PL likely accounted for reports there through 20 Mar (LE, GR); another at Wehrspann L, Sarpy Co, 9 Mar (SMa) also likely wintered. Migrants generally arrive in late Mar.

White-throated Sparrow: Rare in the west in spring, the only Panhandle report was from Scotts Bluff Co 4 May (KD).

Harris's Sparrow: Only one was reported from the west, where the species is rare: it was in Scotts Bluff Co 7 May (DF).

White-crowned Sparrow: Rare in mid-winter in the southeast, 5 at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 4 Mar (JR) had likely wintered there.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported of this fairly common summer resident, and uncommon winter visitor and migrant in the Panhandle.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: There were 6 reports of singles in May (JGJ, NM, WF), last ones in Johnson Co 6 May (WF) and at ICSP 19 May (LA, details). Latest dates are in early Jun.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: As observers better scrutinize juncos, it is becoming clear that the Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco occurs uncommonly but regularly in the state; singles were in Omaha 11 Mar (SMa), in Sarpy Co 16 Mar (EB), and in Bellevue 6 Apr (fide WRS). A male and female were photographed in Lincoln Co 18 Mar (VC, photo). This form is thought to be a stable intergrade population of Oregon and Slate-colored forms.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: This form is rare in the east; a single was in Nebraska City 5 and 27 Mar (SQ) and another in Omaha 16 Mar (SMa).

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: This species does not occur each year in the east, where brightly-colored Oregon Juncos are sometimes misidentified as Pink-sideds. However, two experienced observers found single birds at BOL 15 Mar (JK) and at Wehrspann L, Sarpy Co, 1 Apr (CNK). Two birds photographed in Lincoln Co 18 Mar (VC) were of interest; best guess was that they were intergrades of Oregon and Pink-sided forms.

Summer Tanager: One at ICSP 26 Apr (JR) was rather early; early dates are 23-25 Apr. Westerly was an imm male photographed at LM 11 May (JBe).

Scarlet Tanager: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern migrant and summer resident.

Western Tanager: Only the 10th and 11th Missouri River Valley records were a single in a Bellevue yard 28 Apr-3 May (KCR, CNK photo, L&BP) and one in Omaha 17 May (LBr, details).

Northern Cardinal: Reports continued from recently-established Panhandle North Platte River Valley populations in Scotts Bluff (AD) and Morrill (JJ) Cos.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Westerly for spring migrants were one in Scotts Bluff Co 6 May (AK), where rare, and 3 in Lincoln Co 20 May (SA), where uncommon.

Black-headed Grosbeak: As is the trend in recent years, there were multiple reports of easterly birds, one of which was rather early in southeastern Washington Co 28 Apr (LBl, details). Early dates for the state are 23-24 Apr. The other easterly reports were of one in Bellevue 16 May (LBr) and a male in Johnson Co 24 May (PL).

Blue Grosbeak: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant and summer resident.

Lazuli Bunting: As with Black-headed Grosbeak, recent years have seen more easterly reports in spring; this year there were at least 9 birds reported 6-18 May (m.ob.); since 2008 there have been 30 reported in the east.

Indigo Bunting: The 3 separate singles that arrived 26 Apr were rather early; early dates are 23-25 Apr. They were in Omaha (KF), at ICSP (JR), and in Lancaster Co (VK).

Dickcissel: As in recent years, there were spring reports from the west, where at least one was in each of Scotts Bluff and Banner Cos 31 May (AK); in the past Dickcissels popped up in the west on occasion but usually in June at the earliest. Early dates in the west are 23-25 May.

Bobolink: Two in Saunders Co 28 Apr (JGJ) were rather early; early dates are 28-30 Apr. There is an earlier documented record on 20 Apr (a banded bird) and 4 undocumented records, all probably correct, in the period 20-24 Apr.

Red-winged Blackbird: By far a record spring count, the 100,000 at Jack Sinn 5 Apr (JK) tripled the previous high.

Eastern Meadowlark: Reports were routine for this common eastern migrant and summer resident, uncommon and local westward.

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Early arrivals are single males, usually with Red-winged Blackbirds. Early dates are in late Feb, but one in Saunders Co 10 Mar (GR) and another at Jack Sinn 13 Mar (GR) were on the early side. "Big flocks" had arrived in Platte Co by 10 Apr (MN). Fems arrive later; a single-gender flock was in Hamilton Co 7 May (CNK).

Rusty Blackbird: There were several reports 13 Mar-24 Apr (m.ob.); best counts were 23 in Seward Co 26 Mar (LE) and 20 in Cedar Co 19 Mar (DT). In all, some 90 birds were reported.

Brewer's Blackbird: An impressive 300 on a recent burn at PSP 25 Apr (BFH) tied the high count in the east, and another large group of 250 was at a Butler Co burn the same day (JGJ). This species is uncommon in the east, but, as well as these two high counts, there were 8 other reports from the east, for a total of 615 birds.

Common Grackle: One in Scotts Bluff Co 16 Mar (AK) was rather early for the west; there are a few late Feb dates there, however.

Great-tailed Grackle: The 100 at Jack Sinn 11 Mar (LE) was a good count; high counts are 150-250.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide migrant and common statewide summer resident.

Orchard Oriole: One in Cass Co 26 Apr (SQ) was rather early; early dates are 21-24 Apr.

Hooded Oriole: Intriguing was a report of an oriole with an "orange head", one of several orioles at an oriole feeder tray in Moorefield, Frontier Co, 30 Apr 2014 (SGr); no further details were provided, although a Hooded Oriole was photographed 1 May in Douglas Co, KS.

Bullock's Oriole: Somewhat easterly were singles at LM 11 May (JBe) and in Lincoln Co 15 May (LDe); surprisingly, these are only the 8th and 9th records east of the Panhandle in spring.

Baltimore Oriole: Reports were routine of this common eastern migrant, uncommon west.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported of this uncommon western Panhandle winter visitor; last dates are in Mar.

House Finch: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide resident.

Purple Finch: After a winter of low numbers, there were only 8 reports, none of more than 2 birds (m.ob.)

Red Crossbill: Reports were routine for this common western resident and migrant, uncommon elsewhere.

Common Redpoll: None were reported; the prior winter had very few reported.

Pine Siskin: Few were reported, again following a low-numbers winter; only one was found in Scotts Bluff Co, that on 10 May (AK).

Lesser Goldfinch: Recent years of increasing numbers of this species have shown that arrival of this species is in late May; a male was in a Mitchell yard 25 May (KD, MW) and a single was at Wildcat Hills NC 31 May (KD, AK).

American Goldfinch: "Hundreds" at the PSP feeders 8 Mar (MB) was a good estimate; high counts are 200-300.

Evening Grosbeak: The only report was of a male and fem at a North Platte feeder 7 Mar (GH fide TJW); the fem was still present 10 Mar (TJW).

House Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Double-crested Cormorant and American White Pelican Abundance at Sandhills Lakes During Fall Migration

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Double-crested Cormorants (DCCO, *Phalacrocorax auritus*) and American White Pelicans (AWPE, *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) are migratory piscivorous birds that breed in North America. Both species are abundant spring and fall migrants in Nebraska. DCCOs are also common, albeit local, breeders in northwestern Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). DCCO and AWPE numbers have increased throughout their range in recent decades (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] 2003, Sauer et al. 2013). Both species, but primarily DCCOs, have become increasingly controversial because of increased numbers and also because their principal food source is fish, a resource humans value. Concentrations of DCCOs, and to a lesser extent those of AWPEs, can impact small impoundments such as aquaculture facilities and are suspected of reducing sportfish populations on recreational water bodies (Erwin 1995, King 2005, Trapp et al. 1997, USFWS 2003, Seefelt and Gillingham 2006, Groen and Steinwand 2010).

Localized conflicts between humans and DCCOs and AWPEs have occurred regularly at fish hatcheries and have occasionally been reported at small water bodies in Nebraska (Richard Holland, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, personal communication). We define a conflict as a situation where DCCOs and/or AWPEs

have adverse effects on humans and/or human resources. These localized conflicts between humans and DCCOs and/or AWPEs are readily identified because such instances occur at commercial fish hatcheries and result in property loss. However, DCCOs and AWPEs are suspected to negatively impact sportfish resources at large water bodies in North America, including those that serve as commercial and recreational public fisheries (Trapp et al. 1997, Dorr et al. 2010). Similar concerns have been expressed about recreational public fisheries at Sandhills lakes in Nebraska (Richard Holland, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, personal communication).

Even though DCCOs and AWPEs are known as abundant migrants in Nebraska, existing information is not sufficient to assess whether numbers during migration are at a level that could impact sportfish resources at Sandhills lakes. We studied DCCO and AWPE occurrence and abundance at Sandhills lakes during the 2012 fall migration.

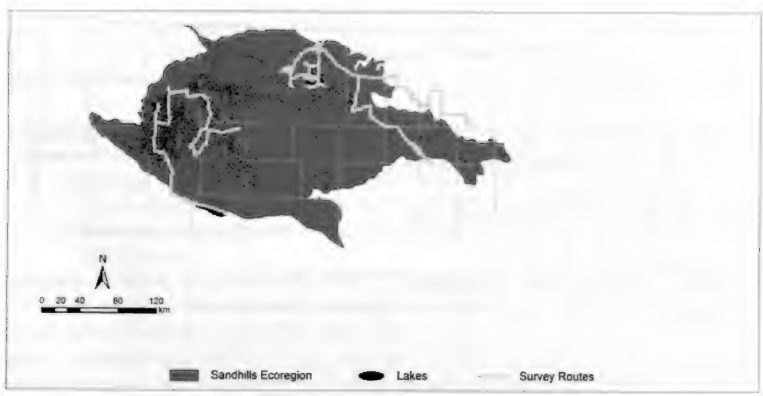

Figure 1. Study area and survey routes – the dark gray area shows the Sandhills ecoregion, the black dots show all lakes within the ecoregion, and the bold light gray lines show the two survey routes.

METHODS

We identified the Sandhills ecoregion, more precisely Sandhills lakes, as our study area (Figure 1). The Sandhills ecoregion covers approximately 12,100,000 acres (4,900,000 hectares) and includes nearly 2,000 shallow lakes (Schneider et al. 2011). We divided the study area into an east and a west region and used ArcGIS (version 9.3) to develop a survey route in each region (Figure 1). We designed routes along public roads in each region; all lakes within a one kilometer distance from the road were selected to be surveyed. Five priority areas included in the study were Lake McConaughy, Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Calamus Reservoir,

Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, and Merritt Reservoir. We selected survey routes that included priority areas and minimized distance traveled, while maximizing the number of lakes less than one kilometer from the road, the number of public fishing lakes, and the proportion of lakes greater than 160 acres (65 hectares). The west region route consisted of 81 lakes including Lake McConaughy and Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The east region route consisted of 63 lakes including Calamus Reservoir, Merritt Reservoir, and Valentine National Wildlife Refuge.

We initiated our study in mid-August, which corresponds with the arrival of migrant DCCOs in Nebraska during fall migration (Sharpe et al. 2001). We conducted a two-day survey of each route once a month from August through October 2012. The majority of lakes along each route were surveyed three times, once each month. A small number of lakes (26) were only surveyed twice. We surveyed small to medium-sized lakes (< 900 acres or < 365 hectares) from the nearest one to three access locations depending on the lake size and accessibility. Large lakes and reservoirs were surveyed from all available access points. We visually scanned each lake using binoculars and conducted counts using a spotting scope. We recorded DCCO and AWPE presence/absence and the number of each species present.

DATA SUMMARIZATION

We categorized all lakes in the study area by type and size. We identified three lake types: reservoirs, public fishing lakes, and other lakes. We defined public fishing lakes as lakes with public fishing access excluding reservoirs. We defined other lakes as all lakes in the Sandhills ecoregion that did not fit the other two categories; this included privately owned lakes that may or may not have fishing and publicly owned lakes that do not allow fishing. We categorized lakes by size using the following five size categories: ≥ 1000 acres, 700 – 999 acres, 400 – 699 acres, 100 – 399 acres, and < 100 acres. We determined the proportion of lakes in each size and type category included in the study.

We produced three metrics: presence/absence, abundance, and density to summarize DCCO and AWPE occurrence at Sandhills lakes. We considered each lake as a data point in these analyses. We calculated the percentage of lakes with DCCOs present and the percentage of lakes with AWPEs present by lake type and size. We constructed histograms showing DCCO and AWPE abundance and density at Sandhills lakes. We summarized DCCO and AWPE abundance temporally by adding all individuals recorded, for each species, by month to show the period within fall migration when the largest concentrations were present in the Sandhills ecoregion.

RESULTS

We conducted surveys from 7 August to 16 October 2012. We made a total of 406 lake surveys; 118 lakes were surveyed three times and 26 lakes were surveyed twice. We surveyed 100% of reservoirs (Lake McConaughy, Calamus and Merritt Reservoirs), 77% of public fishing lakes, and 6% of "other lakes" in our study area. We surveyed 93% of the lakes larger than 400 acres. We found 24% of lakes surveyed were dry; these lakes were all small, shallow, "other lakes" and smaller than 100 acres.

Table 1. Number and percent of lakes surveyed with DCCOs and AWPEs present, by lake type and size.

Categories	Number Surveyed	Number with DCCOs	Percent with DCCOs	Number with AWPEs	Percent with AWPEs
Lake Type					
Reservoirs	9	5	56%	5	56%
Public Fishing Lakes	77	34	44%	17	22%
Other Lakes	320	39	12%	31	10%
Lake Size					
≥ 1000 acres	9	5	56%	5	56%
700 – 999 acres	9	4	44%	3	33%
400 – 699 acres	24	15	63%	13	54%
100 – 399 acres	94	27	29%	17	18%
< 100 acres	270	27	10%	15	6%
TOTAL	**406**	**78**	**19%**	**53**	**13%**

Out of 406 lake surveys, 19% had DCCOs present and 13% had AWPEs present (Table 1). DCCOs and AWPEs were absent on the majority of the lake surveys; most lakes with DCCOs and/or AWPEs had relatively small groups present (< 50, Figure 2). The only lake with greater than 300 DCCOs during any survey was Calamus Reservoir, where 7500 DCCOs were estimated to be present on 15 October; 88% of all DCCOs recorded during the study were at Calamus Reservoir. Calamus Reservoir also had the largest concentration of AWPEs, with an estimated 1490

AWPEs observed on 15 October. However, AWPEs were more evenly distributed across lake types with the largest proportion of AWPEs observed at "other lakes".

Out of 406 lake surveys, 389 (96%) had less than 0.1 DCCO per acre (Figure 3). The highest density of DCCOs was observed at Calamus Reservoir (1.3 DCCOs per acre) on 15 October. All other lakes had less than 0.6 DCCOs per acre with the exception of a small lake with 0.9 DCCOs per acre on 18 September; this lake was approximately eight acres and had seven DCCOs present.

Out of 406 lake surveys, 382 (94%) had less than 0.1 AWPEs per acre (Figure 3). The highest density of AWPEs (3.7 AWPEs per acre) was observed at Little Hay Lake, a 27 acre lake at Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, on 27 August. Seven lakes had greater than one AWPE per acre; most of which were "other lakes" with the exception of one public fishing lake at Avocet Wildlife Management Area.

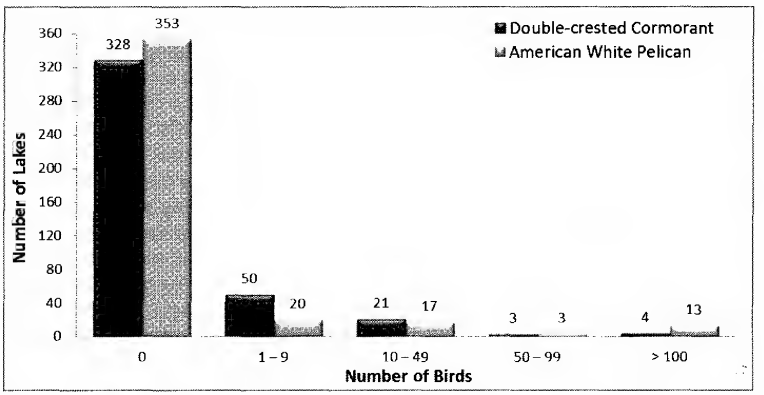

Figure 2. Frequency of DCCO and AWPE abundance (counts) at Sandhill Lakes.

DCCO numbers increased 20 fold from August to October with the largest number of DCCOs being observed in October (Table 2). In August, 66% of DCCOs were observed on "other lakes". In September and October, most DCCOs were observed on reservoirs (82% in September and 97% in October). We observed the largest number of AWPEs in September (Table 2).

DISCUSSION

Fish are a private economic interest when produced commercially for food and stocking. Fish are also a public resource when they occur in public waters and are harvested through recreational fishing. Piscivorous birds feed on fish and,

conceivably, large concentrations of piscivorous birds may cause negative impacts on these resources (Erwin 1995, King 2005, Trapp et al. 1997, USFWS 2003, Seefelt and Gillingham 2006, Groen and Steinwand 2010). All native piscivorous birds that occur in the United States are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (USFWS 2003). Thus, conflicts naturally arise when piscivorous species occur in large concentrations or increase substantially in overall numbers. The DCCO is the piscivorous bird species most frequently identified as causing negative impacts to both public and private resources (USFWS 2003). The AWPE is another piscivorous bird identified, albeit much less frequently and with much less vigor, as causing negative impacts to both public and private resources. DCCOs and AWPEs occur commonly and occasionally in concentrations in Nebraska. Fishing interests have raised concerns about DCCO and AWPE impacts on private and public fish resources in Nebraska, particularly relatively shallow Sandhills lakes (Richard Holland, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, personal communication).

This study found that large concentrations (i.e.,>100 birds) of DCCOs and AWPEs occur infrequently and locally in the Sandhills Ecoregion during fall migration. DCCOs were found in concentrations of over 300 individuals at only one of the 144 lakes visited in this study. Calamus Reservoir had the largest overall number and highest density of DCCOs; almost eight times (7.6) more DCCOs were at Calamus Reservoir than the total number present at all other reservoirs, public fishing lakes, and "other lakes" combined. Our results suggest Calamus Reservoir is an important

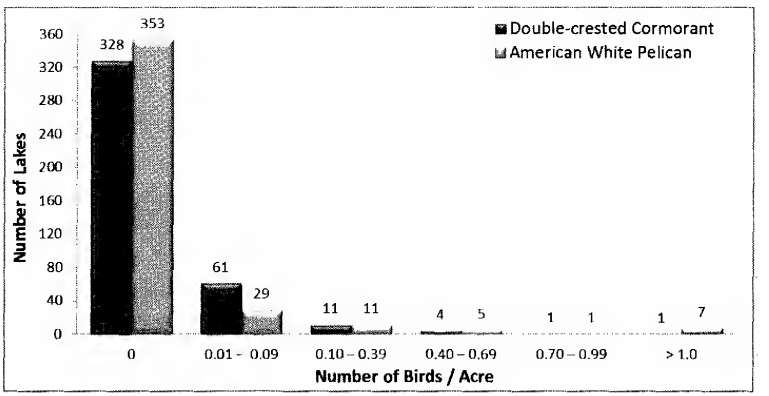

Figure 3. Frequency of DCCO and AWPE density (number/acre) at Sandhill Lake.

staging area for DCCOs during fall migration. Large concentrations were not observed on public fishing lakes or "other lakes". The largest number of DCCOs recorded on a public fishing lake was 80 at Crescent Lake on 10 October. The largest number of DCCOs recorded on "other lakes" was 113 on Goose Lake, Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, on 7 August. However, it should be noted

that a renovated island in Goose Lake supported a breeding colony and adults and near-fledged or fledged juveniles were observed here during the August survey.

In August, the majority of DCCOs were widely distributed in small concentrations at "other lakes". Concentrations were not observed at any lake, with the exception of Goose Lake. During the September surveys DCCO numbers increased on public fishing lakes and reservoirs, but decreased on "other lakes". DCCO numbers peaked in October with a dramatic increase in the numbers observed at Calamus Reservoir. Calamus Reservoir was visited by Jorgensen on 12 November and fewer than 500 DCCOs were present. This additional observation suggests that the October survey recorded peak or near-peak numbers at Calamus Reservoir.

Table 2. Number of DCCOs and AWPEs observed in the Sandhills Ecoregion during fall migration 2012.

Month	DCCO	AWPE
August	387	1746
September	1832	2494
October	8035	2048
TOTAL	**10254**	**6288**

AWPEs were much more evenly distributed across all three lake types. The lake with the largest number of AWPEs was Calamus Reservoir, but some medium-sized public fishing and other lakes had a higher density of AWPEs than Calamus Reservoir. We observed a small number of public fishing lakes (2) and "other lakes" (2) that had between 200 and 500 AWPEs present. AWPE numbers were much more consistent throughout fall migration when compared to DCCOs. AWPE numbers peaked slightly in September.

This study of DCCOs and AWPEs in the Nebraska Sandhills during fall migration provides important preliminary information that can be used to evaluate these species' status. Our results do not provide evidence that Sandhills lakes commonly or routinely host large concentrations (>100 individuals) of DCCOs or AWPEs. Indeed, our results show that most lakes did not have any DCCOs or AWPEs present during fall migration. With an absence of any large concentrations or even individuals, it is highly improbable that either of these piscivorous bird species are negatively impacting public fishing resources in the Sandhills Ecoregion. Our study, however, did not extend into spring migration and bird numbers may be different during that season. Calamus Reservoir was the exception and it appears to be a major staging area for DCCOs during fall migration. NGPC Fisheries Division personnel did not express concerns about large concentrations of DCCOs impacting sportfish resources at Calamus Reservoir because it is believed those birds are feeding mostly on gizzard shad *(Dorosoma cepedianum)* and because lake depth allows fish to avoid capture from diving birds.

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What are Blue Ross's Geese?

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The existence of blue morph ("phase") Ross's Geese (*Chen rossii*) was first well documented by McLandress & McLandress (1979). They reported on several blue-morph birds seen and collected in California and Canada that morphologically appeared to be pure Ross's Geese and on others with intermediate traits that appeared to be hybrids with Lesser Snow Geese *(Chen caerulescens caerulescens*). They also noted that in the California wintering grounds counts held during 1976-77 there were only 3 blue morphs (0.008 percent) among the 38,825 Ross's Geese counted. At that time, only 0.02 percent of the Lesser Snow Geese wintering in California were blue morph, but sightings of blue-morph geese from central Canada were by then already slowly increasing in frequency (Dzubin 1979). Blue-morph Lesser Snow Geese currently represent about 25 percent of the Central Flyway flock of several million Lesser Snow Geese (Johnsgard 2012).

At the same time, Ross's Geese have expanded their breeding range eastwardly across Hudson Bay, and now probably comprise at least two percent of the mixed Snow/Ross's Goose flocks that migrate through Nebraska (Johnsgard 2012). Assuming that about 4.6 million Snow Geese were in the mid-continent flock during the 2013 winter surveys (U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2013), there might be at least 90,000 Ross's Geese in the Central Flyway, and there may be far more. In the west-central population of 725,000 "light geese" that passes through the high plains, nearly a third counted during the 2013 winter survey were Ross's Geese.

McLandress & McLandress (1979) suggested that those birds intermediate in body size and bill structure with blue-morph Lesser Snow Geese are probably the result of hybridization (Table 1). As in Lesser Snow Geese, blue plumage coloration in Ross's Geese is likely controlled by a dominant gene. Thus, blue-plumaged birds having typical Ross's Goose morphology might have resulted from back-crossing, or from recurrent mutations associated with a presumed polymorphic common ancestor of Ross's and Snow Geese. (Cooke and Cooch 1968)

Among a sample of nearly 12,000 Ross's Geese and Lesser Snow Geese from Canada and the U.S., Trauger et al. (1971) identified 32 morphologically intermediate birds. Using various population data, they estimated that 0.2–4.8 percent of the Ross's Geese in the Mississippi and Central Flyways might be hybrids. Later studies (1989–1992) suggest that the incidence of hybrids among Ross's Goose flocks is about 1.9 percent (Ryder and Alisaukis 1995).

Table 1. Measurements of Ross's Geese, Intermediates and Lesser Snow Geese.

Taxon	Sample	Culmen, mm. (avg.)	Wing, mm. (avg.)*	Source
Ross's Goose				
Adult Male	47	37-46 (41)	371-411 (394.8)	Trauger, et al., 1971
Adult Female	32	34-41 (38.5)	362-391 (376.0)	Trauger, et al., 1971
Ross's Goose (Blue)				
Adult Male	1	41.1	380	McLandress & McLandress, 1979
Intermediate				
Adult Male	4	40-48 (45.1)	414-419 (415.8)	Trauger, et al., 1971
Adult Female	4	45-50 (46.6)	382-404 (393.5)	Trauger, et al., 1971
Lesser Snow Goose				
Adult Male	32	53-61 (56.2)	428-474 (449.0)	Trauger, et al., 1971
Adult Female	36	50-59 (53.5)	438-461 (430.2)	Trauger, et al., 1971

* Measurements are from flattened wings

The recent eastward expansion of nesting by Ross's Geese has increased breeding contacts with Lesser Snow Geese. By 2005, about 1,500 pairs of Ross's Geese were nesting on the western coastal tundra of Hudson Bay south of Cape Churchill, Manitoba, (now part of Wapusk National Park). The colony is now surrounded by nesting Lesser Snow Geese, and some mixed pairings have been observed. Furthermore, many clutches having eggs of both species have been found in various nesting areas used by both species (Trauger et al. 1971), the offspring of which might possibly imprint on and later mate with the "wrong" species.

Assuming hybrid matings are similar to matings within the species, it is likely that there are preferential matings among birds of the same plumage type in hybrid matings. In the Manitoba Lesser Snow Goose colony, where about 30 percent of the birds are blue-morph, random mate choice should result in 42 percent of the matings occurring between mixed-morph birds, whereas the actual incidence is 15 percent (Rockwell et al. 2009). Such same-morph mating preferences would presumably reduce the frequency of blue-morph hybrids to less than half of random expectations. Assuming 1.9 percent of Ross's Geese on mixed-species breeding grounds are hybrids, and that preferential same-morph mating occurs as in Lesser Snow Geese, blue-phase hybrids might thus be expected to result from about 15 percent of these mixed pairings, producing about three blue-morph hybrids per thousand Ross's Geese. Of course not all nesting grounds of Ross's Geese are of mixed-species composition, so the actual incidence is much lower.

At least two sightings of blue-morph Ross's Geese have been reported in Nebraska: one seen near Pierce in March of 1994 (Gubanyi 1996) and one in Stanton County in February, 1998, (Sharpe et al. 2001). There is also at least one South Dakota record of a blue-morph Ross's Goose and one of an apparent hybrid (Tallman et al. 2002). There are few other regional records, although David Trauger captured a probable hybrid in northwest Missouri during 1967 (Trauger et al. 1971), and I photographed an apparent white-morph hybrid among a flock of Lesser Snow Geese at Missouri's Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge in 2012.

One conspicuous plumage feature of purported blue-morph Ross's Geese is that the neck, back and scapular feathers are brownish black, with black foreneck feathers extending up to the throat and on the hindneck to the top of the crown, sometimes leaving only a white chin patch similar to that of a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*). This blackish dorsal color contrasts sharply with a (usually) white belly, hindquarters and wing-coverts, and with conspicuously white-edged secondary and tertial feathers.

The National Geographic and Sibley field guides similarly illustrate blue-morph Ross's Geese as having darker neck, back and breast coloration than do typical (homozygotic) blue-morph Snow Geese, but with contrasting white underparts. Some of the birds illustrated on the internet exhibit more dusky underparts, which might suggest that their Snow Goose parentage was homozygous for the blue gene, rather than being of the heterozygous (white-bellied) phenotype.

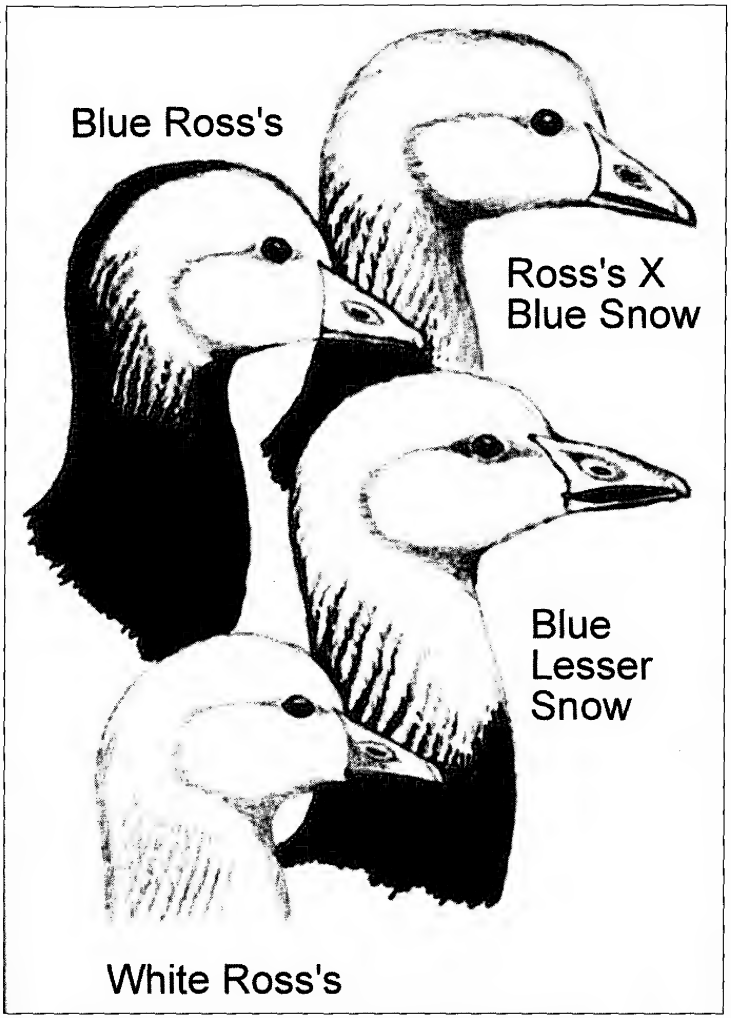

Figure 1. Adult plumage of blue-morph Ross's Goose (top left), showing dark foreneck feathers extending up to chin and dark hindneck feathers extending to top of crown, with little or no "grin patch" on stubby bill; white-morph Ross's Goose (bottom left); hybrid Ross's Goose x blue-morph Lesser Snow Goose (top right), showing less white on throat and crown and intermediate-sized "grin patch"; and blue-morph Lesser Snow Goose (bottom right), showing white throat and crown, wide "grin patch". Drawing by Paul Johnsgard, based on photos and specimens.

Photos of many putative blue-morph Ross's Geese that have been posted on the internet (http://www.oceanwanderers.com/BlueGoose.html) indicate that the bill structures of these birds are essentially identical to those of typical Ross's Geese, lacking black "grinning patches" along the mandibular junctions, and having a bluish gray and variably caruncled bill surface. By comparison, in presumptive hybrids the bill has a narrow black "grinning patch", and is smooth and only slightly grayish basally. The accompanying drawing (Fig. 1) is based on a variety of photographic sources, and is drawn to scale.

Because of the rapidly increasing abundance of Ross's Geese in the mid-continent light goose population (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2013), there are ever-greater chances of Nebraska birders encountering probable white-morph hybrids, or blue-morph birds closely resembling Ross's geese. Future field observations should provide some clues as to what is occurring in this dynamic genetic and evolutionary phenomenon.

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2014 NOU/IOU Joint Meeting in Bellevue

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The May 16-18 combined meeting of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union and the Iowa Ornithologists' Union at Fontenelle Forest Nature Center in Bellevue, Nebraska, was a gigantic success. Over 160 birders from Nebraska, Iowa, and 6 other states attended the 3 day event. Everyone I talked to, from novice to expert, was more than delighted with all of the activities scheduled for this event.

Our Friday evening speaker Ty Smedes had some wonderful photos, especially of warblers, and I heard nothing but positive comments about his program from the attendees. On Saturday afternoon Jerry Toll talked about his experiences banding Red-tailed Hawks at the Hitchcock Nature Center near Crescent, Iowa, and Rick Hollis spoke about the importance of eBird. Saturday evening, Dan Svingen gave us some extremely valuable information regarding the status of many of our Great Plains grassland birds and made everyone feel welcome to come and bird in our nation's national grasslands, especially in South and North Dakota.

What I think made most people happy were the answers to two of the most important questions to birders: Were there birds to see? And how was the weather? To the first question the answer is a resounding YES – 181 species counted: that number included 29 warbler, 24 shorebird, 10 flycatcher and 6 vireo species. To the second question the answer is again a resounding YES (no rain, wind or extremely high temperatures). Or as Goldilocks might have said, everything was 'just right'.

Despite the high overall count of species, there were some obvious misses that could have pushed the total easily as high as 190. For example, here are some of the species that were missed: Great Horned Owl, Screech Owl, Great Egret (I saw one 2 days before the count started), Avocet, Willet (I saw 3 two days after the count), Upland Sandpiper, Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Palm Warbler..... and others.

The organization of this large gathering went off like clockwork. Betty Grenon had all of the meals and box lunches scheduled accurately, and the food was delicious. Dave Heidt did a great job of organizing the field trips, Paul Roisen (who is also good with a microphone and president of IOU) dealt well with the parking issues and made sure the field trips got off on time. And again Betty Grenon (for NOU) and Cecile and Denny Thompson (for both IOU and NOU) made registration run very smoothly with no snafus. Rick Schmid was accommodating when it came to the facilities and making sure all of the electronic equipment was working smoothly.

Field trips were led by Elliott Bedows, Keith Dyche, Clem Klaphake, Robert, Joe and Sam Manning, Neal Ratzlaff, Al Reyer, Justin Rink, Gary Roberts, Paul Roisen, Rick Schmid, Ross Silcock, Phil Swanson, and Jerry Toll. Field trip desinations included Fontenelle Forest, Neale Woods, DeSoto NWR, Lake Manawa and Hitchcock Nature Center.

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Greater White-fronted Goose			x		
Snow Goose			x		
Canada Goose	x	x	x	x	
Wood Duck		x	x		
Gadwall		x	x		
American Wigeon		x			
Mallard			x		
Blue-winged Teal	x	x	x		x
Northern Shoveler		x	x		
Green-winged Teal			x		x
Canvasback			x		
Lesser Scaup			x		
Ruddy Duck			x		
Northern Bobwhite	x		x		
Ring-necked Pheasant	x		x		
Wild Turkey			x	x	
Common Loon			x		
Pied-billed Grebe		x	x		x
Horned Grebe					x
Double-crested Cormorant		x			
American White Pelican			x		
Great Blue Heron	x	x	x		
Cattle Egret					x

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Green Heron		x	x		
White-faced Ibis			x		
Turkey Vulture	x	x	x	x	
Osprey			x		
Bald Eagle			x		
Cooper's Hawk		x	x	x	
Red-shouldered Hawk			x		
Broad-winged Hawk		x	x	x	
Red-tailed Hawk		x	x	x	
Sora			x		x
Black-bellied Plover					x
American Golden-Plover					x
Semipalmated Plover					x
Piping Plover			x		
Killdeer		x	x		x
Spotted Sandpiper			x		
Greater Yellowlegs					x
Lesser Yellowlegs			x		
Hudsonian Godwit			x		x
Ruddy Turnstone			x		x
Stilt Sandpiper					x
Sanderling			x		
Dunlin			x		x
Baird's Sandpiper			x		
Least Sandpiper			x		x
White-rumped Sandpiper			x		x
Buff-breasted Sandpiper			x		
Pectoral Sandpiper			x		x
Semipalmated Sandpiper			x		x
Short-billed Dowitcher			x		x
Long-billed Dowitcher					x
American Woodcock			x		

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Wilson's Phalarope			x		x
Red-necked Phalarope					x
Bonaparte's Gull			x		
Franklin's Gull			x		x
Ring-billed Gull		x	x		x
Least Tern			x		
Black Tern		x	x		x
Forster's Tern		x	x		
Rock Pigeon		x	x		
Eurasian Collared-Dove			x		
Mourning Dove		x	x		
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		x			
Barred Owl			x	x	
Common Nighthawk			x		
Chimney Swift	x	x	x	x	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird		x	x	x	
Belted Kingfisher			x		
Red-headed Woodpecker		x	x	x	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	x	x	x	x	
Downy Woodpecker		x	x	x	
Hairy Woodpecker		x	x	x	
Northern Flicker		x	x		
Pileated Woodpecker			x		
American Kestrel			x		
Olive-sided Flycatcher			x		
Eastern Wood-Pewee		x	x	x	
Acadian Flycatcher			x		
Alder Flycatcher			x		
Willow Flycatcher			x		
Least Flycatcher		x	x	x	
Eastern Phoebe		x	x		
Great Crested Flycatcher		x	x	x	

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Western Kingbird			x		x
Eastern Kingbird		x	x		x
Bell's Vireo			x		
Yellow-throated Vireo	x		x		
Blue-headed Vireo		x	x	x	
Warbling Vireo	x	x	x	x	
Philadelphia Vireo			x		
Red-eyed Vireo		x	x		
Blue Jay		x	x	x	
American Crow		x	x	x	
Horned Lark			x		
Purple Martin			x		
Tree Swallow			x	x	x
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	x	x	x		
Bank Swallow			x		
Cliff Swallow		x	x		
Barn Swallow	x	x	x	x	x
Black-capped Chickadee	x	x	x	x	
Tufted Titmouse		x	x	x	
White-breasted Nuthatch		x	x	x	
Brown Creeper			x		
House Wren	x	x	x	x	
Sedge Wren			x		
Carolina Wren		x	x		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		x	x	x	
Eastern Bluebird		x	x	x	
Veery			x		
Gray-cheeked Thrush			x		
Swainson's Thrush		x	x	x	
Wood Thrush		x	x		
American Robin	x	x	x	x	x
Gray Catbird		x	x	x	

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Brown Thrasher		x	x		
European Starling	x	x	x		
Cedar Waxwing		x	x		
Ovenbird		x	x	x	
Louisiana Waterthrush			x		
Northern Waterthrush		x	x		
Golden-winged Warbler			x		
Blue-winged Warbler		x			
Black-and-white Warbler		x	x	x	
Prothonotary Warbler			x		
Tennessee Warbler		x	x	x	
Orange-crowned Warbler		x	x	x	
Nashville Warbler		x	x		
Mourning Warbler			x		
Kentucky Warbler			x		
Common Yellowthroat		x	x	x	
American Redstart		x	x	x	
Cape May Warbler			x		
Cerulean Warbler			x		
Northern Parula			x		
Magnolia Warbler		x	x	x	
Bay-breasted Warbler			x		
Blackburnian Warbler			x		
Yellow Warbler		x	x	x	
Chestnut-sided Warbler		x	x	x	
Blackpoll Warbler		x	x	x	
Black-throated Blue Warbler			x	x	
Yellow-rumped Warbler		x	x	x	
Yellow-throated Warbler			x		
Black-throated Green Warbler		x			
Canada Warbler			x	x	
Wilson's Warbler		x	x		

NOU Annual Meeting - Bellevue

	Cass	Douglas	Sarpy	Washington	Seward
Eastern Towhee		x	x	x	
Chipping Sparrow	x	x	x		
Clay-colored Sparrow		x	x		x
Field Sparrow		x	x		
Lark Sparrow		x	x		
Savannah Sparrow		x	x		
Song Sparrow			x		x
Lincoln's Sparrow			x		
White-throated Sparrow			x		
Harris's Sparrow			x		
Summer Tanager		x	x		
Scarlet Tanager		x	x	x	
Northern Cardinal		x	x	x	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	x	x	x	x	
Lazuli Bunting			x		
Indigo Bunting		x	x	x	
Dickcissel			x		
Bobolink			x		x
Red-winged Blackbird		x	x	x	x
Eastern Meadowlark			x		
Western Meadowlark			x		x
Common Grackle	x	x	x		x
Great-tailed Grackle					x
Brown-headed Cowbird		x	x	x	
Orchard Oriole	x	x	x	x	
Baltimore Oriole	x	x	x	x	x
House Finch		x	x		
American Goldfinch	x	x	x	x	
House Sparrow		x	x		x
Total species: 181	**22**	**90**	**166**	**54**	**41**

In Memorium

In 2013 the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union lost three loyal members: Alice Rushton, Gertrude Wood and Mitzi Fox.

Alice Rushton

Alice Smith Rushton died in Longmont, Colorado, on Nov. 9, 2013, at age 88. She is survived by three daughters, a son and numerous grandchildren. She was born in Colorado but spent most of her adult life in the Omaha area, employed by the Bennington school system as a teacher and counselor. After retiring from teaching, she and her husband Bud traveled, and after he died, she became the church secretary at First United Methodist Church in Omaha. She was active there with visitation programs and cancer support groups. Obviously Alice was a birder, too, and that is how we came to know her. She continued to enjoy travel, making birding trips to Canada and to New Zealand. She was a longtime NOU member and served as Secretary in 1990. She is remembered as a gentle lady who met life's problems with a positive attitude.

Gertrude Wood

Gertrude True Wood, formerly of Elmwood, died in York on June 11, 2013, at age 83. She is survived by two daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was the widow of Don Wood, with whom she shared a great interest in the history of Cass

County. Gertrude wrote and published *Lewis and Clark in Cass County* in 1996 after she and her husband spent years researching the Expedition's passage up the Missouri River and their camps in Cass County. She worked as a commercial artist and freelance writer. Gertrude also worked for a taxidermy company in the Omaha area, where her job was to make glass eyes used in the taxidermy mounts. She would go to the Henry Doorly Zoo and study the particular animal she was working on so she would get the eyes exactly right. This attention to detail carried over into her birding. She was regarded as a serious and active birder and was known for her keen eyesight and identification skills. According to the NOU website, her life list for the state is 347 species, and there are 26 counties for which her species list totals 125 or more. Most impressive, though, is her Cass County list: 294 species, a record which is likely to stand for years to come. The next best Cass County total is 211.

Mitzi Fox

Mitzi Madsen Fox passed away at age 79 on July 28, 2013, in Albion, where she had lived since 1960 with her husband Jim. She and Jim raised five children in Albion, and Mitzi was active in church groups and served on the boards of the Albion Schools and the First National Bank. She helped raise money for a new swimming pool in Albion and was instrumental in the protection of the Olsen Nature Preserve north of Albion. She was on the board of the Prairie Plains Resource Institute in Aurora. She participated in the Beaver Valley Christmas Bird Count and served as NOU Secretary from 2000 to 2004. She was known as a person who unselfishly gave her time, talent and resources to the community of Albion, never expecting any recognition for what she did. Her knowledge and interests were widely varied, and she could talk about prairie vegetation, good books to read, or New York theater as easily as she could talk about birds in her backyard.

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Send manuscripts and articles to Janis Paseka, Editor (see address below). Send quarterly bird reports and notes on bird sightings to Ross Silcock (see address below).

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SUMMER FIELD REPORT, June-July 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This summer was marked by the "unremarkability", if there is such a thing, of the status of almost all species, especially passerines. A stark exception, however, was the pair of summering hummingbirds in a yard a few miles southeast of Chadron: Juanita Whittecar sent a collection of very good photos of these birds, detailed enough to determine that the pair of supposed Ruby-throated Hummingbirds actually consisted of a female Ruby-throated and a hybrid Ruby-throated x Broad-tailed male. Another odd phenomenon was the number of shorebird species with late Jun records, usually the brief window within which these species are absent in Nebraska. Reasons for this presumed suspension of migration are conjectural. Happily, this blandness was offset by a remarkable array of genuine rarities: first state record Brown Booby, second Mottled Duck, third Wood Stork, and fourth (all 2012-2014) Black-chinned Hummingbird.

Sifting through the species accounts did, however, yield a few items of interest. Ospreys continue to attempt to breed at several locations but without success so far, Mississippi Kites continue to expand slowly in the west, a great photo came to hand of a Whip-poor-will nest with an egg and a chick, Pygmy Nuthatches expanded their range eastward, Cassin's Sparrows were far-flung, and the state's 13th Painted Bunting was found. A phenomenon not often recognized is the absence of certain common breeding passerine species from extreme southwest Nebraska, the driest part of the state. These include Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Great-tailed Grackle.

Given the increasing use of eBird by many observers, it seemed it would be only a matter of time until eBird data would be included in these seasonal reports. Along with the large amount of data gleaned from NEBIRDS and the reports that a few determined reporters send me each season, for this report I checked sightings reported to eBird for all species. I found the data to be useful as a check on what was already on hand, and it enhanced many of the accounts significantly with additional information. Unfortunately, however, this added quite a bit of time to an already time-consuming process, but on balance I think the final result was better because of it.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BBS: Breeding Bird Survey
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
Cem: Cemetery
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co

Co(s): County(ies)
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Knox and Cedar Cos
HCR: Harlan County Res, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave State Park, Richardson/Nemaha Cos
imm: immature
juv: juvenile
L: Lake
LBN: Lakes Babcock and North, Platte Co
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co
m. ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NF: National Forest
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
Res: Reservoir
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore, and Thayer Cos
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Denton
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area

GAZETTEER

Harvard Marsh: Harvard WPA, Clay Co
Jack Sinn: Memorial WMA, Lancaster and Saunders Cos
Marsh Duck: WMA, York Co
Pine Ridge: escarpment in Sioux, Dawes, and Sheridan Cos
Sandhills: large area of sand-based prairie in north-central Nebraska
Tamora: WMA, Seward Co
Wildcat Hills: escarpment in Scotts Bluff, Banner, and Morrill Cos

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J&GB: Jay & Ginger Belsan, Ogallala
J&MW: Jack & Mac Williams, Hartsville, SC
JB: Joan Bergeron, Hanson Lake, Bellevue
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JJa: Jenny Janes, Grand Island
JK: Jon King, Lincoln
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JV: John Vanderpoel, Niwot, CO
JW: Juanita Whittecar, Chadron
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KK: Kathleen Kent, Paso Robles, CA
KL: Krista Lang, Auburn
KP: Kevin Poague, Lincoln
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
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SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SS: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
TE: Tom Ewart, Alexandria, VA
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
WB: Wendy Becker, Orient, OH
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Now virtually annual, two were photographed at HCR 25 Jul (fide JGJ); this is the 17th record for the state.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Perhaps the least likely of the geese to occur in summer, the only report was of one at Marsh Duck 22 Jun (JGJ).

Snow Goose: There were 8 reports of 1-2 birds, total 10 (m. ob.), mostly in the east, a normal summer scenario. One in Scotts Bluff Co 18 Jun (LE) was westerly.

Ross's Goose: Two at BOL 10 Jul (LE) was the only report; recent years have seen more reports as wintering numbers increase in Nebraska.

Canada Goose: This species is an uncommon, even rare, breeder in RWB wetlands (JGJ); a brood was at Marsh Duck 10 Jun (JGJ).

Mute Swan: A free-flying bird was in the area of a Kearney golf course for about a week through at least 11 Jun (LR, RH); its provenance is unknown.

Trumpeter Swan: The nesting pair at Ravenna, now in their 4th year, had 4 young 11 Jun but a hail storm 27 Jul killed the last surviving chick (LR, RH). It appears that no chicks have survived to fledging in the four years at this site.

Wood Duck: The 38 males at La Platte wetlands, Sarpy Co, 4 Jun (L&BP) might be an indicator of numerous breeding pairs in the area.

Gadwall: A fem in Valley Co 8 Jun (LR, RH) and 2 in the eastern RWB 10 Jun (JGJ) were likely breeders, although there have been few reports from either area in recent years.

American Wigeon: None were reported 2 Jun-22 Jul; one was in Thomas Co 23 Jul (KK), likely a local breeder or molt migrant. Molt migrants may appear in late Jul.

Mallard: Reports were routine of this common summer resident.

Mottled Duck: One was first seen at La Platte wetlands, Sarpy Co, 7 Jul and identified as this species 11 Jul (JR, L&BP); 2 were seen 11 Jul (JR, CNK), but all other sightings through 14 Jul were of a single bird (m. ob.). It probably left as the flooded fields dried rapidly. This is only the 2nd record for Nebraska, the first in 1958.

This Mottled Duck, Nebraska's second, was photographed by Michael Willison in southeast Sarpy County 12 Jul 2014.

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine for this locally common statewide summer resident.

Cinnamon Teal: None were reported of this uncommon western summer resident.

Northern Shoveler: Reports in Jun in the eastern RWB are likely breeders; 12 were counted there 10 Jun (JGJ), and 1-4 at wetlands in York, Seward, and Clay Cos through 29 Jun (SMa, TG, MW, JK) were of interest as they would have been very late if migrants; breeding is rare in the eastern RWB, with few actual records. Probably breeding locally was one in Johnson Co 14 Jul (SQ).

Northern Pintail: This species is an uncommon to rare breeder in the eastern RWB; 1-3 were at Marsh Duck 17-21 Jun (JGJ, RMa, LE) and 2 were at Tamora 29 Jun (MW).

Green-winged Teal: Molt migration begins early in this species, often in mid- to late Jun and usually males; 11 in the eastern RWB 10 Jun (JGJ) were perhaps a bit early to be molt migrants, but all were males. One at La Platte Bottoms,

Sarpy Co, 12 Jul (MW, JR) and 4-7 at Marsh Duck 17-21 Jun (RMa, LE, JR) were likely molt migrants.

Canvasback: One in York Co 21-22 Jun (LE, JGJ) was only the 4th summer record for the RWB.

Redhead: This species is rare in summer away from the Sandhills and RWB. Singles (likely the same bird) at Lincoln Saline Wetlands, Lancaster Co, 7 Jun and 8 Jul (MW) provided one of fewer than 10 summer records in the southeast.

Ring-necked Duck: Two were at CLNWR 18 Jun (JV), likely late migrants; this species is not known to have bred in Nebraska for around 100 years.

Lesser Scaup: A male and female were at La Platte Bottoms 3-9 Jul (CNK, ARy, L&BP) and a fem was in Douglas Co 17 Jun (SMa); the latter was likely a late migrant, but the La Platte birds may have been failed breeders, and only about the 15th summer report away from the Sandhills and RWB. Breeding is not currently known to occur in Nebraska.

Hooded Merganser: This species occurs in summer in small numbers, essentially all in imm plumage and non-breeders. There were 7 reports involving 12 birds (m. ob.), all from the east. Breeding is rarely documented.

Common Merganser: There appear to be 3 sites where this species occurs regularly in summer, likely year-old non-breeders or molt migrants. There were no reports from L Alice, Scotts Bluff Co, but 3 fems were on the Niobrara River near the Norden Bridge in Brown Co 22 Jun (MR), and the site with most reports, LO, had up to 10 through 18 Jun (LE, m. ob.). There is a single breeding record at the Norden Bridge site, in 2007. Most surprising was a male in a ditch in southeastern Washington Co 21 Jun (BP).

Ruddy Duck: A few non-breeding stragglers occur in summer, but are rare; a basic-plumaged male was in Douglas Co 17 Jun (SMa) and a fem was at Jack Sinn 10 Jul (LE). Breeding is rare away from the Sandhills and RWB.

Northern Bobwhite: Numbers decline northwestward, and so these 3 reports were of interest: 4 were in Thomas Co 18 Jun (MR), one in Garden Co just south of CLNWR (JV), and one at Steer Creek Campground, Cherry Co, 19 Jun (MR).

Gray Partridge: None were reported of this uncommon northeastern and north-central resident.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine for this locally common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine for this fairly common northern and western grasslands resident.

Greater Prairie Chicken: Reports were routine for this locally common grassland resident.

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Common Loon: Birds in alternate or near-alternate plumages were rather late in Cedar Co 1 Jun (DT) and at LO 2 Jun (TJW). An imm at LM 4 Jun (D&MM) and a single at Box Butte Res, Dawes Co, 4 Jun (RSg) may summer in the area, a fairly common occurrence for imms in the west.

Pied-billed Grebe: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer resident, locally common Sandhills.

Eared Grebe: Two at Spikerush WMA, York Co, 10 Jun (JGJ) were at a site where breeding occurred in 2007; nesting is rare in the RWB.

Western Grebe: Good numbers were reported through Jul on major bodies of water in the west half of the state; best count was the 220-225 on LM 26-30 Jul (SMa, MW). Numbers begin to build at places like Merritt Res and LM in late Jul as young birds are able to fly.

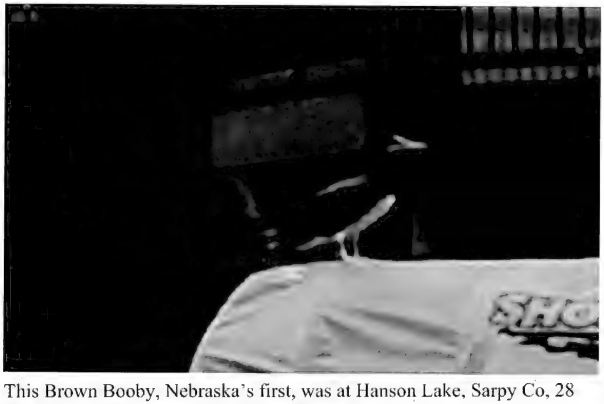
Clark's Grebe: At least 4 were reported on LM and LO during the period (D&MM, LE, GD); this species breeds there in small numbers. The only other report was of one in Hayes Co 2 Jun (WF), presumably a tardy migrant.

Nebraska's third record of Wood Stork was documented by this photograph taken at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington County, 4 Jun 2014, by Margaret Delaittre (original photo lightened by WRS).

Wood Stork: Nebraska's third record was documented with a cell phone photo taken as the bird wandered across a road at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 4 Jun (MD, photo). There were reports as well from Minnesota and Kansas around the same time. Regarding the Kansas bird, Ed Raynor commented on KSBIRD: "The Wood Stork at Marais Des Cygnes is likely a post-breeding individual from Central America. Unlike the rather endangered, sedentary

population in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, Wood Storks that annually arrive at Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi's catfish and crawfish aquaculture operations are known to come from colonies in Mexico and other Central American colonies. They spend mid-summer to early fall at these bountiful operations and some even winter along the coast."

Brown Booby: Nebraska's first booby of any species was a Brown, photographed at a private lake development, Hanson L, in southern Sarpy Co 28 Jun-1 Jul (JB photo, fide DC, fide JR, fide CNK, fide MB). The photos identify the bird as of the expected Atlantic Ocean subspecies *Sula leucogaster leucogaster*.



This Brown Booby, Nebraska's first, was at Hanson Lake, Sarpy Co, 28 Jun-1 Jul and photographed by Joan Bergeron.

Double-crested Cormorant: Reports were routine for this common northern and western summer resident, uncommon summer visitor elsewhere.

American White Pelican: The 140 at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 13 Jun (JC, SS) was a good summer tally; high counts of summer wanderers (mostly non-breeding imms) are 310-420. Breeding does not occur in Nebraska.

American Bittern: This species probably breeds at Harvard Marsh in years with good water conditions; this year, 4-8 were present during the period (MW).

Least Bittern: This species may occur in good numbers in the southeast in wet years; there were several reports: 1-3, "a family" (JC, SS), were at Jack Sinn 2-16 Jul (m. ob.), and singles were at 3 other locations, Harvard Marsh 13 Jul (MW), Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co, the same day (TJW), and Bluestem L, Lancaster Co, 25 Jul (CWo).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer visitor.

Great Egret: Less common in the west and rare in the Panhandle in mid-summer, one was in Lincoln Co 20 Jun (TJW), and 3-4 were at LO 19-30 Jul (J&MW, AL).

Snowy Egret: None were reported of this uncommon statewide summer visitor.

Little Blue Heron: None were reported of this uncommon statewide summer visitor, rare west.

Cattle Egret: There were about 15 reports scattered over the eastern and central parts of the state, best count only 12, at HCR 17 Jun (TJW). Westerly, where uncommon, were singles at North Platte 20 Jun (TJW) and CLNWR 18 Jun (JV).

Green Heron: Two were northwesterly at Arcadia Diversion Dam WMA, Custer Co, 29 Jul (WF); breeding can occur over most of the state but is rare north of the Platte River Valley in the western half of the state.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Reports were routine for this uncommon common statewide summer resident, locally common Sandhills.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: None were reported of this rare summer visitor in the south-central and southeast.

Glossy Ibis: Despite 6 reports in spring, there were no summer reports.

White-faced Ibis: This species has nested in the RWB 9 times since 2001, including 2 attempts this summer, but none have been shown to be successful (JGJ). This is likely due to drying up of the nest areas. Some 50 adults and several nests were found at Troester WPA, Hamilton Co, 2 Jul, but the attempt was abandoned by 10 Jul (JGJ), and about 20 were at Harvard Marsh 7 and 20 Jul, where it was "certainly breeding" (MW), but no outcome was reported. One flew over Spikerush WMA, York Co, 25 Jun (TG), for no obvious reason.

Turkey Vulture: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and summer visitor.

Osprey: Nesting has been attempted in recent years at LM, but without success; a single bird was in the area 13 Jun (JGJ) and 19-26 Jul (KK, J&MW, MW). An attempt at a new location in Scotts Bluff Co was on a tall light pole in Lacy Park, Scottsbluff, where an adult was on the nest 13 Jul but none were seen two weeks later (KD). There have been attempts at Riverside Park, Scottsbluff, and Winters Creek in recent years, none apparently successful. A single in the GPD area through the period (DT) and another at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 18 Jun (MR) may have been un-mated birds. One in Antelope Co 5 Jun (DT) was likely a late migrant. Late dates are (were) 4-5 Jun.

Mississippi Kite: The breeding population at North Platte added a second site (TJW), an encouraging development. Breeding continues at Ogallala, with best count 4-6 on 25 Jul (SMa) and at Benkelman, where 3 were seen 21 Jun (MW). Two were found at the Chase Co courthouse in Imperial where birds were present in 2013 (LE), also encouraging. Thus there are now 4 sites in western Nebraska where breeding is continuing. Breeding began in Ogallala in 1991, but at the other 3 sites only in the last few years.

Bald Eagle: The continuing success of this species in Nebraska was described in the website outdoornebraska.ne.gov/wildlife. There were 90 active nests in the state in 2011 and more in 2012.

Northern Harrier: An adult with a recently-fledged young bird in Boone Co, east of the usual breeding range, 19 Jul (JGJ) may have hatched elsewhere; nesting can occur anywhere in the state but is most common in the north-central.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident.

Red-shouldered Hawk: The only report was of one over FF 30 Jul (ARy); this is a traditional nesting site, but there were no further reports that might have indicated nesting this summer.

Broad-winged Hawk: The Birchwood St, North Platte, pair had fledged 2 young by 24 Jul (TJW); this site has been active back to 2008, with varying success. Westerly was one in Sioux Co 19 Jun (LE); such westerly reports have increased in recent years, but are still scarce.

Swainson's Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common western and central summer resident.

Red-tailed Hawk: Following spring reports of birds in the east showing characters of Red-tailed (Krider's) Hawk, one in Thomas Co 14 Jul (MAR) was nearer the expected northwest area of the state where this form probably breeds regularly in small numbers.

Ferruginous Hawk: A nearly-fledged juv was on a nest in Dundy Co 14 Jun (JGJ); this is about on time, as most young are fledged by mid-Jul.

Golden Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon western resident.

Virginia Rail: One was at Spikerush WMA, York Co, 15 Jun (JK); there are only a few nesting records for the eastern RWB, as well as some summer records such as this one.

Sora: Reports were routine for this fairly common, locally common, statewide summer resident.

American Coot: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide summer resident.

Sandhill Crane: A belated breeding report was from the Hutton Ranch, Rock Co, where in 2013 2 chicks were fledged but one was found dead, and the fate of the other was unknown (RK fide WM). This is the 3rd breeding record from that area (2006, 2008, 2013). The 3rd summer report from the Loup drainage was of 3 apparent ads photographed flying along the Middle Loup River near Arcadia, Valley Co, 15 Jun (AP); breeding may have occurred near Burwell in 1995, but was unconfirmed. Three at Rowe Sanctuary 18 Jul (CV) may have halted migration; there are about 20 summer records of apparent non-breeders.

Black-bellied Plover: None were reported of this uncommon spring and fall migrant; late and early dates are 14-21 Jun and 25-28 Jul.

Snowy Plover: A bird seen at Tamora 18 May (JGJ) was likely the same bird still there 15 and 17 Jun (JK, MW), when it probably moved to Marsh Duck 17-21 Jun (JGJ, LE). This is only the 3rd RWB record for Jun-Jul.

Semipalmated Plover: One of only 3 records for the state 13 Jun-3 Jul was of 2 at Tamora 21-24 Jun (SMa photo, RMa, MW). It is hard to say if they were coming or going. This is only the 10th overall record for Jun.

Piping Plover: Reports were from traditional breeding locations at LM, western Douglas Co, and Cedar Co (m. ob); best count was the 8 at Mile 807 on the Missouri River in Cedar Co (AM).

Killdeer: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Mountain Plover: None were reported of this rare southern Panhandle summer resident.

Black-necked Stilt: A less-than-annual migrant east of the RWB, one was in Lancaster Co 6 Jun (LE). The only RWB reports were of singles at Shypoke

WMA, Seward Co, 22 Jun (JGJ) and Troester WPA, Hamilton Co, 2 Jul (JGJ), fewer than in recent years.

American Avocet: As many as 8 were at Tamora through 29 Jun (m. ob.) and 1-3 were at Marsh Duck through 21 Jun (JGJ, SMa, RMa). Although there are a few breeding records for the RWB, no evidence for such was noted at these locations. One in Sarpy Co 13 Jul (NR) was about on time for first fall arrivers.

Spotted Sandpiper: Although an uncommon breeder statewide, few nests are documented. An ad with a brood was in York Co 10 Jul (JGJ), and 2 ads and 2 fledged young were at Two Rivers SP, Douglas Co, 25 Jun (SMa). The 21 at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 28 Jul (MW) was a good count; high counts are 30-61.

Solitary Sandpiper: One in Butler Co 1 Jul (CD) was rather early; early dates are 24-25 Jun.

Greater Yellowlegs: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Willet: Easterly for the date was a single in Rock Co 14 Jun (WF); this is primarily a western Sandhills breeder.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Upland Sandpiper: The 37 on the Sumner BBS route in Dawson Co 29 Jun (LR, RH) was a good count; high counts are (were) 27-40.

Long-billed Curlew: Easterly were one in Brown Co 13 Jun (WF) and 2 at Hutton Ranch, Rock Co, 1 Jun (CM, TE). Eastern limits of the Sandhills breeding range resemble those of Willet.

Marbled Godwit: A low-density breeder in northern and northwestern Nebraska, reports were of one near Smith L, Sheridan Co, 5 Jun (CNK), and 3 in northern Garden Co 12 Jul (KS). The latter birds and 5 at LO 26 Jul (MW) were likely migrants; migration begins around 20 Jun, as exemplified by one at Tamora 29 Jun (MW).

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant, common central.

Sanderling: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Dunlin: None of this uncommon easterly spring and fall migrant were reported. Migrants are not unexpected into Jun, but do not appear in fall until Sep.

Baird's Sandpiper: Three at Tamora 22 Jun (JGJ) and one still there 29 Jun (MW) were tardy; there are only 5 reports between 20 Jun and 9 Jul. These were likely another example of suspended migration.

Least Sandpiper: Tamora hosted singles, likely the same bird, 17 and 24 Jun (MW); there are 6 records between 10 and 20 Jun, likely all of birds suspending migration.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Like Semipalmated Sandpiper, this is a late migrant in spring. Last reported were rather late: 4 at Tamora 21 Jun (SMa, RMa) and 2 at Marsh Duck the same day (LE). Late dates are 21-23 Jun.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Only the 4th state record for Jun was one at Tamora 17 Jun (MW). One there 26 Jul (JGJ) was rather early; it may have been the same bird that was reported 17 Jun.

Pectoral Sandpiper: This is another species that migrates well into Jun; late dates are 19-21 Jun. Two at Marsh Duck 21 Jun (LE) and 2 at Tamora 24 Jun MW)

were rather late. There are 5 reports 24 Jun-4 Jul, presumably resulting from suspended migration.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Migrants are still numerous into Jun; last reported were 2 at Tamora 15-17 Jun (MW, JK) and 3 at LM 13 Jun (JGJ); late dates are 18-19 Jun. One in Lancaster Co 8 Jul (MW) was rather early; early dates are 2-4 Jul.

Western Sandpiper: None were reported of this rare statewide spring migrant.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Two in Sherman Co 2 Jun (CNK) are the first Jun record for Nebraska and latest on record, by only 2 days however. Late dates are (were) 28-31 May.

Long-billed Dowitcher: One in the Panhandle 12 Jul (KS photo) was the earliest documented fall record; early dates are (were) all 13 Jul.

Wilson's Snipe: Reports were routine for this uncommon northern and western summer resident.

American Woodcock: None of this uncommon eastern summer resident were reported.

Wilson's Phalarope: As many as 15 were at Tamora through 29 Jun (MW, m. ob.), and one was at Marsh Duck 17 Jun (JGJ). At Tamora, 2 juvs were present 24 Jun (MW), indicating successful breeding. Breeding is sporadic in the eastern RWB; this is about the 16th such record since 1996.

Franklin's Gull: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring and fall migrant and uncommon summer visitor.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide spring and fall migrant and fairly common summer visitor.

California Gull: A few summer at LM, and fall migrants arrive during Jul; numbers are usually low, however. The only reports were of 2 there 14 Jul (JGJ, MB) and an ad on 26 Jul (MW).

Herring Gull: None were reported of this uncommon statewide summer visitor.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: The only report was of a molting 3rd cycle bird at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 23-25 Jul (SMa photo). This species is primarily a spring and fall migrant in Nebraska; this record is only the 5th in the period 15 May-25 Jul.

Least Tern: Most of the numerous reports were from known breeding locations on the Platte, lower Niobrara, lower Loup, and lower Elkhorn river systems. Elsewhere, an ad and 2 basic or imm birds were at Arcadia Diversion Dam, Custer Co, 29 Jul (WF), where the species is not known to breed.

Caspian Tern: Previously, records were least numerous in mid-summer, in the period 11 Jun-15 Jul, but this year there were four such records: 3 Jul GPD (AM), 10 Jul BOL (LE), 13 Jul LBN (TJW), and 14 Jul LM (JGJ, MB).

Black Tern: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring and fall migrant, locally common summer resident.

Common Tern: An alternate ad at Tamora 21 Jun (SMa photo, RMa) was rather late, as was another in Cherry Co 18 Jun (MR); late dates are (were) 18-21 Jun.

Forster's Tern: One at FF 10 Jun was rather late; late dates are 10-11 Jun. There were 3 reports of even later birds: singles at North Platte 16 Jun (LE), HCR 17-18 Jun (TJW), and LBN 21 Jun (LE). The LBN report is one of only about 20 in the southeast in the period 12 Jun-3 Jul.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: Following the 4 spring reports involving 4-5 birds, this summer saw an additional 8 reports from locations not reported in spring from Central City westward, involving 9-10 birds (m. ob.). A group of 4 at the University of Nebraska, Kearney, 11 Jun (LR, RH) continued through the period, with 2 half-grown young present 10 Jul (LR, RH). This appears to be only the 3rd proven breeding record, although there are several reports suggestive of breeding.

Mourning Dove: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident, uncommon west.

Black-billed Cuckoo: There were an encouraging 8 reports statewide (m. ob.) for this species; reports have become fewer in recent years.

Barn Owl: Rare in the east, one was in Nemaha Co 16 Jun (CNK). Remarkable was the report of 9-12 birds in 2 family groups using holes about a mile apart in a canal embankment between Roscoe and Paxton 25 Jul; 2 ads and 2-3 young were at one hole and 2 ads and 3-5 young were at the other (RMa). Also indicative of a good food source were the 7 fluffy young in a grain bin in Lincoln Co 16 Jun (TJW).

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Burrowing Owl: Four broods were in a prairie dog town about 4 miles south of Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co, 4 Jul; brood counts were 7, 1, 5, and 2, along with 4 ads seen (SS, JC). None were reported east of Valentine and Lincoln Co.

Barred Owl: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern resident.

Long-eared Owl: None were reported of this rare statewide resident.

Short-eared Owl: None were reported of this rare statewide resident.

Common Nighthawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Common Poorwill: This species breeds eastward through most of the Niobrara River Valley; it was reported at Hutton Niobrara Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary, Rock Co, 1 Jun (CM).

Chuck-will's-Widow: The 2 reports were both from ICSP; 3-4 birds were reported 12 Jun (JR) and another 3 Jul (BP).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: A nest containing an egg and a chick was photographed at ICSP 3 Jul (KL photo, fide JGJ), only the 6th documented nesting for Nebraska.

Chimney Swift: Reports were routine for this common eastern summer resident, uncommon west.

White-throated Swift: The 10 at WHNC 17 Jun (LE) was a good tally for the location; highest counts, 13-40, are from Scotts Bluff NM, Scotts Bluff Co.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: A fem in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 23 Jul (KD) was preceded in the same yard by a pair that spent the summer of 2013 there. One was westerly at Grand Island 21 Jul (RB), possibly a very early migrant; early dates are 22-24 Jul west of the breeding range. See Broad-tailed Hummingbird account.

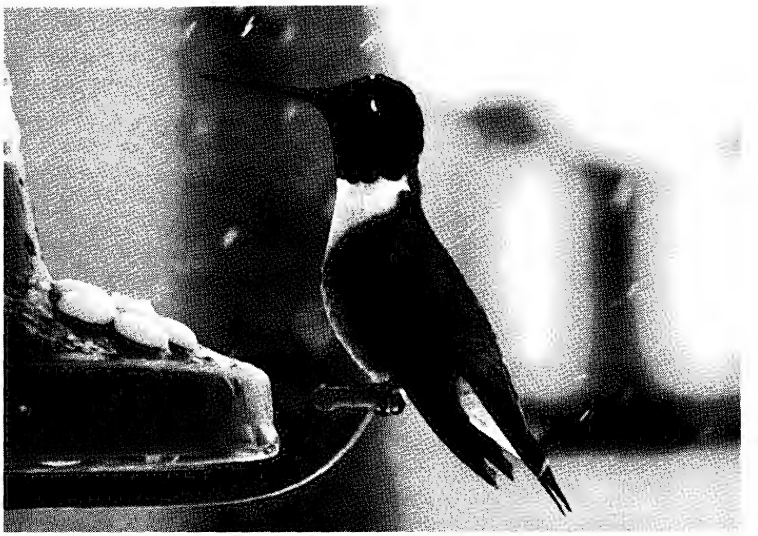
Black-chinned Hummingbird: A male photographed at a feeder at LM 29 Jun (J&GB) is Nebraska's 4th record, all in 2012-2014. This species is expanding its summer range northward on the western Great Plains and more records are expected, along with likely breeding.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: As expected, singles were in the DeLara yard near Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co, another hummer magnet, 22 and 25 Jul (KD) and at WHNC 18 Jul (MAR). Juanita Whittecar, whose yard is in extreme eastern Dawes Co some 10 miles southeast of Chadron, took a series of excellent photos of the summering hummers in her yard. She posted on eBird a photo taken 28 May of a presumed female Ruby-throated, which Marshall Iliff subsequently re-identified as a Broad-tailed, only the 2nd documented spring record for Nebraska.

This Black-chinned Hummingbird, Nebraska's 4th, was at a L McConaughy feeder during the last week of June 2014, photographed here on 29 June by Jay Belsan.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird x Broad-tailed Hummingbird: Extraordinary was the presence of a pair of presumed Ruby-throateds in a yard a few miles southeast of Chadron, in extreme eastern Dawes Co. Juanita Whittecar, the observer, sent a large series of photos to WRS in an attempt to confirm the presence through summer of a pair of Ruby-throateds or possibly a pair of Broad-taileds. Although a female Broad-tailed was first seen 22 May, it apparently did not stay, as the photos did not confirm its presence or that of a male Broad-tailed during the summer. However, the series of photos, taken 6 May-9 Jul (JW), did show a female Ruby-throated, and a male that superficially resembled a Ruby-throated. However, the photos of the male showed some

unexpected features for Ruby-throated, notably the Broad-tailed-like pointed outer primary. Several of the photos were sent to Sheri Williamson at the Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory, who confirmed, based on several features, that the male bird was almost certainly a hybrid of Ruby-throated and Broad-tailed, only the second documented record of an inter-generic hybrid with Ruby-throated. This male hybrid appeared 6 May and was present until 10 Aug (JW).



This hybrid Ruby-throated Hummingbird x Broad-tailed Hummingbird, identified by Sheri Williamson of the Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory, apparently only the second example of an inter-generic hybrid involving Ruby-throated Hummingbird, occurred with a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird in extreme eastern Dawes Co; it was first seen 6 May 2014, photographed (here) 8 May by Juanita Whittecar, and remained until mid August.

Rufous Hummingbird: Six were in the DeLara yard near Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co: an ad male 22 Jul and 2 ad males and 3 ad fems 25 Jul (KD); another was in an Oshkosh yard 23-25 Jul (LJ), and a fem was at WHNC 22 Jul (AV).

Calliope Hummingbird: Four were reported, 2 as expected in Scotts Bluff Co 25 and 27 Jul (MW, KD), and one at a well-known hummingbird magnet, the Belsan feeders at LM 25-26 Jul (J&GB, SMa; photos). This is the 8th record east of the Panhandle.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident.

Lewis's Woodpecker: The small group near Coffee Park, Sioux Co, continued, although with 5 sightings of only single birds 7-21 Jun (RSg, LE, SM).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, less common westward.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central resident, rare Panhandle.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Pileated Woodpecker: This species has been established and breeding at FF since 1999; this year a pair was feeding 2 juvs there 8 Jun (JC, SS). Expansion and consolidation continues in the Little Blue River Valley; one near Hebron 23 Jun (LR, RH) is the westernmost record in the Little Blue River Valley. Source birds for this expansion appear to be from the south in Kansas; both Blue Rivers (and the Republican River) drain into the Kansas River near Manhattan, KS. No evidence exists for expansion westward from the Missouri River Valley (Big and Little Nemaha Rivers, Platte River)..

American Kestrel; Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer resident.

Peregrine Falcon: Reports were routine of this local resident (Omaha, Lincoln).

Prairie Falcon: Reports were routine of this uncommon western resident.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Last reported was at FF 10 Jun (EB); late dates are 14-16 Jun.

Western Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine for this common western summer resident.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine for this common eastern summer resident.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: The distinctive "che-bunk" call was heard at ICSP 1 Jun (WRS), rather late; late dates are 1-4 Jun.

Acadian Flycatcher: Until recently, summer reports from FF have been sporadic; this year 1-2 were there through at least 20 Jun (CNK, RS, BW). In recent years at least one has been found each year at WP; one was singing there 10 Jun (LE).

Alder Flycatcher: The only report was of one at FF 1 Jun (CBr); last dates are in early Jun.

Willow Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide summer resident.

Least Flycatcher: This species probably breeds in the extreme north, including the Pine Ridge (WM) although documentation of breeding is lacking. Cottonwoods are a favored breeding habitat; one in such habitat at Fort Robinson, Sioux Co, 3 Jun (CNK) may have intended to summer or was merely a migrant. However, one at Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 18 Jun (AA), two at Smith Falls SP, Cherry Co, 18 Jun (AA), and one at Scottsbluff SL 9 Jul (GQ) may have been nesting, although the Scottsbluff bird may have been an early migrant. Early dates for fall migrants are in mid to late Jul.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: Reports were as expected in the western Pine Ridge (RSg, LE, MR), and of interest was one calling near the WHNC 27 Jul (MW), where breeding occurred in 2003 but reports have been sporadic since. This bird may

have summered there, as there are no fall records of presumed migrants in Jul; all are in Aug-Sep.

Eastern Phoebe: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Say's Phoebe: Near the eastern edge of the summer range in the south were singles in Dawson Co 29 Jun (LR, RH) and Furnas Co 11 Jul (WF). One in Nance Co 26 Jun (RSt) was easterly; recent years have seen a few records in the Platte and Loup drainages. The 4 nestlings in a nest in Antelope Co 24 Jun (RSt, MR) were possibly a second brood.

Great Crested Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, less common westward.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine for this common northwestern summer resident.

Western Kingbird: Of two nests on power poles in Papillion, one had 4 nestlings 15 Jul 2014 (L&BP); this is rather late for nestlings.

Eastern Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Now a regular but rare summer resident in the south-central and southeast, a nesting pair was near Hebron 23 Jun (LR, RH).

Loggerhead Shrike: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer resident.

Bell's Vireo: Reports were routine of this locally common statewide summer resident.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern summer resident.

Plumbeous Vireo: Reports were routine of this uncommon Panhandle summer resident.

Warbling Vireo: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Pinyon Jay: This species is rarely reported in summer and is a secretive breeder in the northwest. The only report was from a feeder regularly used by this species in Morrill Co, where around 20 birds attend during the summer (CH).

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Black-billed Magpie: As usual in recent years, the news is mixed; only 2 were seen on a 4-day western Nebraska trip, and those were on 19 Jun at Smiley Canyon, Sioux Co (LE). A family group of 8 was in Snell Canyon, Lincoln Co, 8 Jul (TJW); none had been found in the cedar canyons in Lincoln Co on 453 count points in 2013 (TJW). Scotts Bluff NM is a consistent site; up to 5 were there through the period (m. ob.).

American Crow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Purple Martin: The westerly colony at Benkelman had "numerous" birds 13 Jun (JGJ) and 15 on 21 Jun (MW). Three at Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 6 Jul (CWi), were only the 2nd record west of Ainsworth in the Niobrara River Valley. Two at Broken Bow SL 29 Jul (MW) were northwesterly. Staging begins in late Jul at favored locations such as Omaha and Lincoln Saline Wetlands NP, Lincoln; 850 were at the latter 29 Jul (MW).

Tree Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, less common west.

Violet-green Swallow: Reports were routine of this fairly common Panhandle summer resident.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Bank Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Cliff Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Tufted Titmouse: Reports were routine of this common eastern resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: One in conifers at North Platte 5 Jul (LR, RH) was out of place for the date; early fall migrants appear in late Jul.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports from areas where the species is somewhat uncommon in summer came from Dawson Co 1 Jun (WF) and 29 Jul (WF), Buffalo Co 5-6 Jul (WF), and Custer 29 Jul (WF). Although the species breeds throughout the Platte and North Platte River Valleys, numbers decline significantly west of Hall Co, and reports from the western Loup drainage are also scarce.

Pygmy Nuthatch: In 2008 this species extended its Pine Ridge and Wildcat Hills breeding range some 100 miles to Steer Creek Campground, McKelvie NF, Cherry Co (DH), and this year a pair was nesting at the NNF, Thomas Co, 18 Jun (MR), a distance of some 150 miles from Steer Creek Campground.

Brown Creeper: One singing in pines at Steer Creek Campground, Cherry Co, 19 Jun (MR, JV) was away from the known Niobrara River Valley and Pine Ridge breeding areas.

Rock Wren: Reports were routine for this fairly common western summer resident.

House Wren: Surveys of burned areas at ICSP 20 Jun indicated that removal of understory has essentially eliminated this species in the interior forest, not a surprising outcome (WRS).

Sedge Wren: Most migrants pass through by early Jun and returning birds (some of which attempt to breed) arrive in mid-Jul. Birds present from early Jun through mid-Jul may attempt to breed, but breeding has not often been documented in this time period; this year there were several reports, but none with breeding evidence: 3 were at Shoemaker Marsh, Lincoln, 18 Jun (JK), 2 in Lincoln Co 23 Jun (TJW), one in Stanton Co 1 Jul (WF), and 1-3 at Jack Sinn 4-7 Jul (TG).

Marsh Wren: Birds singing eastern and western song types both occur in Nebraska as summer residents; easterns east of a line from O'Neill southward around the east edge of the Sandhills but including the Rainwater Basin, and westerns in the rest of the state. Two easterns were at Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 1 Jul (WF) and westerns were in Rock and Loup Cos 14 Jun (WF). As with Sedge Wren, some birds return in Jul and may breed; first such arrivals, where there had been no summering birds, were at Harvard Marsh 13 Jul (MW), and in the eastern RWB 19 and 26 Jul (JGJ).

Carolina Wren: Westernmost reported was at Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 6 Jul (CWi); there are scattered records of non-breeding singles through most of the state except the northwest forested areas. Westernmost breeding to date was a pair nesting in Gothenburg 7 Jun (MP fide JGJ); nesting has occurred at HCR and McCook.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: This species has expanded throughout most of the state in recent years, but is still rare to uncommon in the Sandhills and along the Niobrara River in central Nebraska; singles were at Valentine 21 Jun (MR) and Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 22 Jun (MR).

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer resident, less common westward.

Mountain Bluebird: Reports were routine of this fairly common western summer resident.

Swainson's Thrush: None were reported; migration lasts into Jun in northwest Nebraska.

Wood Thrush: Reports were routine for this locally common eastern summer resident.

American Robin: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Gray Catbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, less common west.

Northern Mockingbird: Good numbers now occur in grassland areas in the southeast; a BBS route in Nemaha and Pawnee Cos 16 Jun counted 12 (CNK).

Sage Thrasher: Fall migration gets under way in late Jul; singles were rather early in Kimball Co 24 Jul (CW) and in Scotts Bluff Co 27 Jul (MW); early dates are (were) 19-25 Jul.

Brown Thrasher: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

European Starling: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide summer resident.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Reports were routine of this common western, fairly common northern, summer resident.

McCown's Longspur: Reports were routine of this fairly common western Panhandle summer resident.

Ovenbird: For the 4th consecutive summer and 6th overall, beginning in 2009, 2 were present and singing in the Chester Island WMA, Lincoln Co, area 1 Jul (TJW); there are several mid-summer Platte River Valley records, and although likely, breeding is unproven. Breeding is also likely at NNF, Thomas Co, where 7 were recorded 18 Jun (MR).

Louisiana Waterthrush: There are very few records west of the Missouri River Valley; only the 3rd was one at Rose Creek WMA, Jefferson Co, 22 Jun (JC, SS). John Carlini and Shari Schwartz continued their study of this species along Stone Creek in PRSP, locating 4 territories there, all of which successfully fledged young, as well as another on Decker Creek in the park. Ads were feeding 3 nestlings 7-8 Jul on a Stone Creek territory, presumably a re-nesting, as the birds usually depart in late Jul-Aug (JC, SS). An ad was carrying food 14 Jul, and 5 juvs were still present on 2 territories as late as 28 Jul (JC, SS).

Black-and-white Warbler: Presumably a late migrant was one at PRSP 4 Jun (JC, SS).

Prothonotary Warbler: At the FF breeding site on Great Marsh this year, 2 fledglings were seen 21 Jul (RS).

Tennessee Warbler: None were reported; last dates are 10-11 Jun.

Mourning Warbler: Last reported was a male in Omaha 2 Jun (JR); last dates are 12-15 Jun for this late migrant.

Kentucky Warbler: Three territories were located at PRSP and 1-2 birds were reported at FF for the period (m. ob.); the species has summered for a few years at least at both locations, as well as at ICSP, where 10+ were counted on surveys in early Jun (WRS).

Common Yellowthroat: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

American Redstart: This species breeds in the Pine Ridge, but there are only a few summer records farther south in Scotts Bluff Co; in recent years there have been reports from the L Minatare area, this year one on 12 Jun (RSg), but there was no evidence of breeding.

Cerulean Warbler: None were reported; there were 3 spring reports 7-19 May.

Northern Parula: A presumed stray migrant at Fort Robinson SP, Sioux Co, 3 Jun (CNK) was the 18th spring Panhandle record. Also westerly was one in Hayes Co 2 Jun (WF).

Yellow Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Blackpoll Warbler: One in Monroe Canyon, Sioux Co, 7 Jun (KD, RSg) was 6th-latest for spring. This species is a statewide migrant in spring.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common Panhandle summer resident.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: A tardy male at PL 15 Jun (JC, SS) tied the latest spring date on record.

Yellow-throated Warbler: 1-2 were reported in FF through 8 Jun (BW, MW, JC, SS), where the species summers. There are very few reports elsewhere, but one reported at Four Mile Creek WMA, Richardson Co, 11 Jun (CB) would be the first summer record away from FF and more likely was a stray migrant.

Yellow-breasted Chat: This species occurs in summer regularly east in the Platte River Valley to Buffalo Co, where one was seen 6 Jul (WF). Reports in the east are few, although recent years have seen an uptick; one at ICSP 1 Jun (SMa) was certainly one of 2 at the same location 30 May (JR).

Spotted Towhee: Easternmost reported was in Nance Co 4 Jun (WF), near the east edge of the hybrid zone; phenotypically "pure"-looking birds of Spotted or Eastern Towhee may occur in the hybrid zone.

Eastern Towhee: Mirroring the situation with Spotted Towhee within the hybrid zone were single Easterns in Hayes and Frontier Cos 2 Jun (WF); there are few records of such birds west of there in the Republican River Valley.

Cassin's Sparrow: Recent years have seen an increase in records and range in Nebraska, likely related to extensive drought in the southwest United States. Nebraska reports included sightings as far east and north as Lincoln and Cherry Cos. In Lincoln Co, one was found in a sand-sage area a few miles south of North Platte 11 Jun (TJW) and 2 were there 21 Jun (MW photo). There were reports from two locations in Cherry Co; one was recorded at Valentine NWR 5 Jun (MS fide JGJ) and another was seen just south of McKelvie NF 15 Jun (MS fide JGJ). These appear to be the first records for Cherry Co, and Lincoln Co is

the easternmost county where this species has been found. In its Dundy Co stronghold, 13 were found on a BBS route there 13 Jun (JGJ).

Chipping Sparrow: This species is uncommon but increasing slowly in the southwest as a breeding bird, usually first noted in conifers planted around residences. One was in Frontier Co 2 Jun (WF), but none were reported from the southern row of counties west of there. It is also increasing in the cedar canyons in southern Lincoln Co, where it is spreading away from residences (TJW).

This Cassin's Sparrow was photographed by Michael Willison 21 Jun 2014 in a sand-sage area a few miles south of North Platte, Nebraska, where the species has been found previously. This is the easternmost known location for this species in the state.

Brewer's Sparrow: Reports were routine of this uncommon western Panhandle summer resident.

Field Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, rare Panhandle.

Vesper Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common northern and western summer resident, uncommon east, rare south.

Lark Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, less common south and east.

Lark Bunting: Easternmost reported were singles in Dawson Co 29 Jun (LR, RH) and in Lincoln Co 4 Jul (JC, SS); these sightings are not unexpected at those locations, although summering there is sporadic.

Savannah Sparrow: A singing bird a few miles south of Mitchell 25 Jun (CR) was in an area where suitable habitat exists (WM). This species breeds in a few widely-scattered locations in northern Nebraska.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident.

Henslow's Sparrow: Reports were from 3 locations favored by this species: up to 4 were at Burchard L SRA, Pawnee Co, 31 May-13 Jun (SMa, MW photo, SQ); 2-3 were at SCP during the period (KP, m. ob.); and one was on Platte River Whooping Crane Trust property in Hall Co 1 Jul (JJa), where the species has been present in previous summers.

This cooperative Henslow's Sparrow was photographed by Michael Willison at Burchard L SRA, Pawnee Co, 31 May 2014.

Song Sparrow: This species has been slowly expanding its range south and west from the south side of the Platte River Valley in recent years, but is still scarce or absent in summer in the far southwest. Reports this summer outlining the

current southerly edge of the range were from Hayes, Frontier, and Harlan Cos (TJW, WF).

Swamp Sparrow: Reports were routine of this locally common north-central and northeastern summer resident.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported; this is a fairly common northwestern summer resident.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: A fem present for a "few weeks" at a feeder at the GPD Visitor Center through 30 Jul (DT) provided Nebraska's first record for the period 23 Jun-30 Aug.

Summer Tanager: Westerly was a fem seen and heard calling just south of North Platte 30 Jun (WB), only the 6th summer record away from the Missouri River Valley.

Scarlet Tanager: One at Redbird WMA, Holt Co, 25 Jun (RSt) was near the western edge of the summer range along the Niobrara River.

Western Tanager: Reports were routine of this fairly common northwestern summer resident.

Northern Cardinal: Reports were routine for this common eastern and central resident, rare and local Panhandle.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Reports were routine for this common eastern summer resident, less common westward.

Black-headed Grosbeak: One in Valley Co 14 Jun (WF) was at the eastern edge of the range in the Loup Drainage, and another in Keya Paha Co 13 Jun (WF) was near the eastern edge of the Niobrara River Valley range. Summering birds occur east to Hall Co in the Platte River Valley and Harlan Co in the Republican River Valley.

Blue Grosbeak: Reports were routine for this common western summer resident, less common eastward.

Lazuli Bunting: Reports were routine for this fairly common western summer resident.

Indigo Bunting: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident, uncommon west.

Painted Bunting: A male and a possible fem or juv were near Hebron, Thayer Co, 19 Jun (DA); a subsequent search there did not locate the birds although the habitat was suitable for this species (JC, SS). This is the 13th documented record for Nebraska, although more might be expected as this species expands its range in northeastern Kansas.

Dickcissel: After a major influx into the cedar canyons of southern Lincoln Co 2010-2011, numbers declined in 2012-2013, but recovered this summer, although not to the 2010-2011 levels (TJW). None were reported in the Panhandle.

Bobolink: Reports were routine for this common northern breeder, uncommon and local south.

Red-winged Blackbird: Reports were routine for this common, locally abundant, statewide summer resident.

Eastern Meadowlark: Two in Hitchcock Co 2 Jul were in a Conservation Reserve Program brome field during a wet year (TJW), apparently only about the 6th record from this often dry part of the state, including counties south of the Platte River Valley and west of Webster Co.

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine for this locally common statewide summer resident, less common south.

Brewer's Blackbird: Reports were routine for this fairly common Panhandle summer resident.

Common Grackle: Late summer flocks form as soon as juveniles are fledged; one such flock was in Omaha 9 Jul (MJR).

Great-tailed Grackle: There are few reports from the southwest; one was in Dundy Co 13 Jun (JGJ).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Bullock's Oriole: This species apparently reaches the eastern edge of its summer range in Keith Co, although most sightings there are likely of introgressants with Baltimore Oriole. Reports of phenotypically pure Bullock's were of a fem in an Ogallala yard in summer (2013, JO) and a "possible fem" at the Beltran feeders near LM along with 3 apparent "hybrids" 26 Jul (SMa photo). The photos of the "possible fem" are convincing as a fem Bullock's Oriole (WRS).

Baltimore Oriole: Reports were routine for this common eastern and central summer resident, rare Panhandle.

House Finch: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Red Crossbill: This species often breeds rather early, and small flocks may wander considerable distances during summer. Breeding is not known at NNF, Thomas Co, where a group of 7, including a juvenile being fed by an adult, as well as 4 fly-overs, all on 18 Jun, were recorded, all being Type 2 (MR), the expected Nebraska breeding type. The presence of 2 at Steer Creek Campground, Cherry Co, 18 Jun (MR) and one at Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co, 6 Jul (CWi) may have presaged the appearance one far to the east for the date in Dixon Co 13 Jul (JJ).

Pine Siskin: Breeding is known at NNF, Thomas Co, where 2 were "together" 18 Jun (MR). The only other report was of 2 at Wildcat Hills SRA, Scotts Bluff Co, 27 Jul (MW), where breeding also occurs.

Lesser Goldfinch: This species is now well-established in the Wildcat Hills around WHNC; as many as 6 were there through the period (TG, m. ob.). Unexpected was one 27 Jul at the Hoffman feeder in southern Morrill Co (MW), famous for its large attendance of Pinyon Jays.

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

House Sparrow: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Stomach Content Analysis of Recent Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus)* Specimens from Nebraska

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Introduction

The Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) is a circumpolar bird of prey that breeds in extreme northern latitudes, including Canadian and Alaskan tundra. During winter months, some immature and non-breeding birds disperse south. North American birds may travel to southern Canada and northern parts of the United States, and in some extreme cases as far south as Oklahoma and Texas (Parmelee 1992). Although not fully understood, these irruptive events may be caused by the abundance of prey in northern Canada and Alaska (Parmelee 1992).

Prey typical of Snowy Owls are small mammals (e.g. lemmings and hares) of their home range and an occasional bird from a variety of species including waterfowl (Parmelee, 1992). Research on prey items selected by birds outside of breeding range in North America primarily includes ducks and grebes in southwest British Columbia (Campbell and MacColl 1978), voles in Montana (Detienne et al. 2008), and mice and voles in southern Alberta and Michigan (Boxall and Lein 1982, Chamberlin 1980, respectively).

Over the past century, several irruptions of Snowy Owls have been recorded in Nebraska, most notably during the winters of 1917-18, 1954-55, and 2011-12 (Jorgensen et al., 2012). The most recent of these irruptions, during the winter of 2011-12, produced the largest number of confirmed Snowy Owl sightings in Kansas and Missouri, possibly explained by the increased ease of communication through the use of mobile technology in the general public (Robbins and Otte 2013).

Once reaching areas as far south as Nebraska, Snowy Owls typically suffer high rates of mortality, possibly due to lack of prey species, disease, or anthropogenic factors (Kerlinger and Lein 1988, Meade 1942). During the 2011-12 irruption, several carcasses were donated to the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM) and provided a source for examination of body condition and diet. Also included was one carcass donated to UNSM during the following winter, 2012-13.

In Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas, 379 Snowy Owl sightings were confirmed by researchers at the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute, and the Kansas State Research Extension (Jorgensen et al. 2012, Robbins and Otte 2013). However, sex, age class, and diet information was only recorded for Missouri and Kansas birds. The University of Nebraska State Museum prepared seven specimens salvaged during this time and recorded external measurements. Several more specimens were salvaged but location and other data were not recorded and not included in this analysis. The primary objective of this study was to examine evidence of diet in Snowy Owl fatalities in Nebraska in the winters of 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Methods

All Snowy Owl specimens were salvaged via NGPC personnel, except one that was salvaged by Labedz under the UNSM salvage permit. All data resulted from consistent protocol of study skin preparation in the Zoology Division at UNSM. Careful observation of body condition, including fat level (Winker 2000), condition of muscle mass, and signs of disease were also recorded (Table 1). Additional determination of age was accomplished using Pyle (1997) and Seidensticker et al. (2011). Where possible, cause of death of each individual was determined and noted. A permanent museum catalog number was assigned to each finished specimen.

Gut contents were saved from individuals (2) where food items were present. The bolus of food material was carefully removed and weighed. The bolus was placed in a 95% ethyl alcohol solution for preservation. At a later date the bolus was removed from alcohol and sorted into identifiable part groupings (i.e., bony material, fur/feathers, etc.) and further retained in alcohol. The bony materials were later soaked in water and cleaned of extraneous tissue by use of dermestid beetles (*Dermestes maculatus*).

Bones from the stomach contents were considered the primary source identification of the prey items. Bones were identified by direct comparison to the extensive collection of vertebrate skeletal remains at UNSM. Bone and bone fragments were identified to bone element (e.g., cervical vertebrae) and to animal Class (e.g., Aves) by general comparison. Once Class was determined, specimens of similar size were examined until a match was found. Once a match was found, all similar species within that group were compared and often multiple individuals within a species were compared to separate individual variation from species variation.

Non-bony material from the bolus was retained in alcohol. Subsets of feathers and other soft materials were removed from alcohol, washed in water, and dried. The dried material could then be used for comparison to soft parts of possible prey species.

Results

Of the seven owls prepared during this study, one was too badly damaged to record any internal information. Of the six remaining specimens, four had no gut contents and exhibited a range of degraded muscle mass and emaciation. The remaining two had identifiable remains in their digestive system and seemingly healthy body conditions (Table 1).

The first of these two birds (ZM-18695, male) was found dead on 22 Feb 2012 in Harlan County, Nebraska. This bird had very heavy subcutaneous and visceral fat content. It appeared to be very healthy and had a full stomach (bolus weight: 42.72g).

Whole and fragmented bones found within the bolus of ZM-18695 include: seven whole/partial cervical vertebrae, five distal pieces of scapula, one fragment of the posterior area of keel from sternum, six rib fragments, and about ten miscellaneous bone fragments. The bones were determined to be avian, and narrowed to waterfowl (Anseriformes) by structural anatomy and size comparisons. Further comparisons eliminated all waterfowl except Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) but a confident identification could not be made. However, large numbers of vermiculated feathers were also found in the bolus. These feathers compared favorably to Northern Pintail and did not compare favorably to Mallard. Thus we determined this prey item to be a male Northern Pintail.

Table 1: Measurement details of *Bubo scandiacus* within this study. Average weights of Snowy Owls with moderate fat deposits are 1806 ± 30 g for males and 2279 ± 57 g for females (Parmelee, 1992). Imm = immature, Ad = adult, HY = hatching year, SY = second year, TY = third year.

UNSM Catalog Number	ZM-18463	ZM-18464	ZM-18471	ZM-18693	ZM-18695	ZM-18696	ZM-18697
Date Salvaged	7 Jan 2012	11 Jan 2012	4 Jan 2012	Jan 2012	22 Feb 2012	12 Dec 2012	5 Mar 2012
County	Hall	Buffalo	Adams	Dodge	Harlan	Saunders	Adams
Sex	Male by plumage	Male by plumage	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male
Weight (g)	N/A	1304.4	1020.6	951.5	1779.5	1431.3	810.0
Total Length (mm)	N/A	574	565	525	560	607	505
Wing Chord (mm)	N/A	379	385	405	390	440	380
Bolus weight (g)	None	None	None	None	42.72	36.21	None
Age	Imm/SY	Imm/SY	Imm/SY	Ad/TY	Imm/SY	Imm/HY	Imm/SY
Body Condition	No Fat	No Fat	No Fat	No Fat	Heavy Fat	No Fat	Emaciated

The second specimen (ZM-18696, female) was found dead in Saunders County, Nebraska, on 12 Dec 2012. This bird appeared less healthy, with no visible fat, but was not emaciated (bolus weight: 36.21g). Whole and fragmented bone pieces found include: one atlas (1st cervical vertebrae), odontoid process of axis (2nd cervical vertebrae), three other cervical vertebrae, one rib, numerous tracheal rings, and two miscellaneous bone fragments. Visual comparison confidently determined bone remains having the closest similarity to those of Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). Further comparison of large numbers of feathers from the stomach found all to be white, with several having rusty-colored tips. These rusty colored feathers closely resembled soil-stained breast feathers of UNSM snow goose skin specimens.

Discussion

The findings of this study illustrate the variable diet of Snowy Owls when dispersed to southern locations. Interestingly, former research showed the primary food source of wintering Snowy Owls in Montana (Detienne et al. 2008) to be voles (*Microtus montanus, M. pennsylvanicus*), which are similar in size to the lemmings of their breeding grounds. This is intriguing because many small mammals, including the same species of vole (*M. pennsylvanicus*), inhabit much of Nebraska (Genoways et al. 2008). However, the only study specifying food items of irruptive owls in this region found an American Coot (*Fulica americana*) and Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) (Robbins and Otte 2013). In our study as well, the only stomach contents discovered were bird species. One study found that Snowy Owls are capable of existing solely on avian prey, but only where no small mammals are known to be present (Williams and Frank 1979).

This discovery raises questions regarding diet preference of irruptive Snowy Owls in Nebraska. While small mammals are the primary food source of Snowy Owls, there are instances of larger prey items being taken to meet energy requirements (Boxall and Lein 1989). It is not uncommon for these owls to take large birds, like ptarmigan and ducks, in their arctic breeding range (Parmelee 1992). Within their wintering range in Canada, they have been known to take sea ducks (e.g., Common Eider, *Somateria mollissima* and Long-tailed Ducks, *Clangula hyemalis*) (Robertson and Gilchrist 2003). Chevalier (1988) reports Snowy Owls taking avian prey up to the size of American Black Ducks (*Anas rubripes*). However, little work has been done to find diet preference of birds involved in irruptive movements.

In this study the food item (Snow Goose) of sample ZM-18696 was larger than any other prey item reported in North American wintering or irruptive Snowy Owls. In fact, of the literature listed above, no prey items reported were larger than 1300 grams. The mean weight of ten Nebraska Snow Goose samples from UNSM is 2365 grams, making this potentially the largest reported food item for wintering or irruptive Snowy Owls in North America.

It is unknown in this instance if the consumption of waterfowl was opportunistic or targeted. Both samples were salvaged near large bodies of water known to harbor great numbers of waterfowl: Harlan County Reservoir (ZM-18695) and Lake Wanahoo (ZM-18696). Snowy Owl specimens that are salvaged in this state are often starving or diseased, so it is possible that the birds were in such great need of food that they resorted to a more energetically expensive option. However, it is curious that no bird studied in Nebraska, Kansas, or Missouri during the 2011-12 irruption showed evidence of small mammal consumption. It is also possible that the two individuals in this study could have scavenged instead of hunting the Northern Pintail and Snow Goose. Scavenging is rare in Snowy Owls but has been witnessed in British Columbia (Patterson, 2007).

Possible confounds in this study could have arisen due to the small sample size available. Furthermore, bias could be present in the sample because the specimens donated to UNSM were found dead, and not actively collected by researchers. This leads to the possibly that only the owls that were already weakened had died and were consequently found. Healthier birds could be present in the state, but have managed to find sufficient prey and avoid lethal anthropogenic forces.

Further research avenues in this topic could include a more specific study of the diet preference of a larger sample of irruptive Snowy Owls in the Great Plains, based on field collections and observation. Furthermore, geographic tracking of the movements of Snowy Owls throughout the year might reveal more accurate clues to the motivation of southward movement and consequential adjustment in prey selection, or variation in Snowy Owl movements as a result of global climate change.

Acknowledgements

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Contact Zone of the Eastern and Western Marsh Wrens in Nebraska Revisited

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Across the northern and coastal United States and southern central Canada the Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) is a widespread breeder in cattail-dominated marshes. Although it has long been considered to be polytypic based on subtle plumage characters (Parkes 1959; Phillips 1986), it was not until Kroodsma (1989, 2005) demonstrated that there was a dramatic break in the primary (song) vocalization in the northern Great Plains that anyone suggested more than one species was involved. In 1986, as part of the delineation of the breeding distribution of both vocal types, Kroodsma (1988; see map therein) audio recorded wrens at nine localities in Nebraska. He determined that breeding eastern (*Cistothorus p. palustris*) birds are primarily restricted to the northeastern corner of the state, whereas westerns (*C. p. paludicola)* were found in the western two-thirds of the state north of the Platte River. He found no wrens in an approximate 100 km wide corridor, although at two localities he found both song types (hereafter referred to as Eastern and Western subspecies; based on upcoming genetic work it will soon be recommended that these be elevated to species level; K. Barker, Robbins et al.). Twenty-five years later, in early June 2011, I reassessed the distribution of breeding Marsh Wrens in Nebraska.

Methods

Using Kroodsma's (1988) 1986 data as a reference for sampling, I visited ca. 30 sites in roughly the eastern two-thirds of the state during early June 2011, with a few selected sites revisited in June 2014. With the exception of two sites, Crystal Cove Park, Dakota County (#13, Fig. 1) and Ericson Lake, Wheeler County (#6, Fig. 1), I surveyed all localities where Kroodsma recorded wrens, as well as a number of other areas (Fig. 1). At all but the Cherry County sites, I played prerecorded songs of both subspecies to elicit vocal responses. Audio recordings and voucher specimens were obtained for selected individuals, deposited at the Macaulay Library, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York (accessible online) and the University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute (accessible online via VertNet), respectively. Except where noted, the following localities where I recorded wrens are depicted in figure 1: 1) Valentine National Wildlife Refuge; 2) Ballards Marsh State Wildlife Management Area (SWMA); 3) Pony Lake; 4) Doolittle (=Overton) Lake; 5) Swan Lake; 6) Erickson Lake (see above); 7) Goose Lake SWMA; 8) private marsh along Elkhorn River between Ewing and Clearwater; 9) private marsh just north of Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park; 10) west of Niobrara in

Missouri River floodplain; 11) northern edge of Niobrara; 12) Wood Duck SWMA; 13) Crystal Cove Park (see above).

Results and Discussion

My 2011 and 2014 surveys determined that the breeding distribution of the two subspecies has not changed in the subsequent 25 years since Kroodsma's 1986 assessment (Fig. 1). I did not find both subspecies at the two sites, Pony Lake (# 3, Fig. 1) and Doolittle (=Overton) Lake (# 4, Fig. 1) where Kroodsma (1988) had single Easterns at each lake among a total of 80 Westerns. I found only Westerns present at Pony Lake, and there was no appropriate wren habitat at Doolittle in 2011. However, to the east in 2011, I did record and collect at least 3 territorial Easterns among at least 22 territorial Westerns at Goose Lake SWMA, Holt County (solid star; Fig. 1). Genetic data on these samples will be published elsewhere (K. Barker, Robbins et al.). At this same site on 17 June 2014, only Westerns (n=33 territorial males) were recorded. This was the only site where I found both subspecies. In addition to the above variation between 2011 and 2014, at the northwestern corner of the Antelope County site (#9, Fig. 1), I recorded two pairs of Easterns in 2011, although none were present in June 2014 despite seemingly appropriate breeding conditions. There were a number of other sites that had prime breeding habitat (tall cattails, appropriate water levels), but no wrens (denoted with "x" in Fig 1). Thus as Kroodsma noted, there appears to be very little contact between these two subspecies in Nebraska.

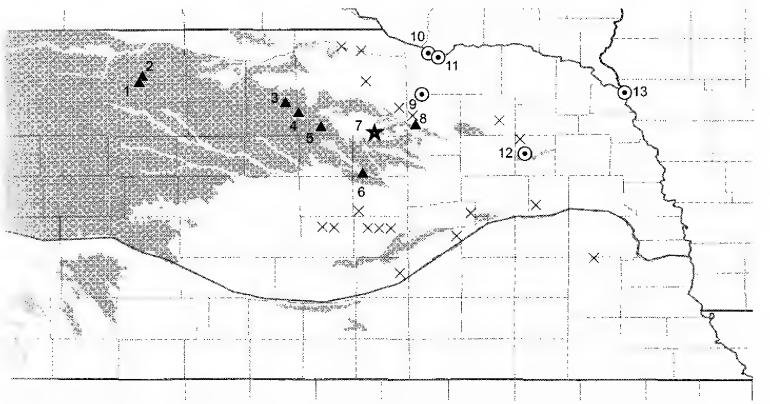

Fig. 1. Map of Eastern (circles) and Western (solid triangles) Marsh Wren breeding localities during June 2011 survey. Sites #6 and #13 were sampled only in the 1986 Kroodsma survey. Gray area represents the Sandhill landform. Solid star indicates the only locality, Goose Lake SWMA, where both were together. "X" indicates localities were no wrens were present. Details for locality numbers are in Methods.

Interestingly, the Western Marsh Wren's breeding distribution in Nebraska appears closely correlated with the Sandhills landform (gray area, Fig. 1), whereas that of the Eastern is primarily along the upper Missouri River floodplain. Complicating the generalization of the Eastern breeding distribution is the southward movement of wrens from mid-July through August where that subspecies reaches northeastern Kansas, southern Iowa, and northern Missouri to breed again (Robbins, unpubl. data). For example, although in 1986 Kroodsma (1988) recorded Eastern Marsh Wren at Wood Duck SWMA (#12, Fig. 1), the area lacked appropriate habitat during my 1 June 2011 visit. Nonetheless, two wrens were noted there in August 2011 (D. Heidt, pers. comm.). Moreover, despite seemingly appropriate habitat at Jack Sinn SWMA, Saunders/Lancaster Cos., I failed to find any wrens there in June 2011; however, T. Labedz found small numbers at this area in August 2011 and in subsequent years during the same period. Thus, at least in the extreme eastern part of Nebraska there appears to be a movement of wrens during the mid-July/August period as has been noted elsewhere (Robbins, unpubl. data).

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2013 (25th) REPORT OF THE NOU RECORDS COMMITTEE

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The functions and methods of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC) are described in its bylaws (NOURC 2010). The committee's purpose is to provide a procedure for documenting unusual bird sightings and to establish a list of all documented birds for Nebraska. Accidental and casual species for which the NOURC seeks documentation (NOURC Review List) can be found at the NOU website (www.noubirds.org).

All records mentioned here are available to interested persons at the NOU archives at the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM), Lincoln, NE. Interested parties should contact the current NOU Librarian, whose address can be found in the latest issue of *The Nebraska Bird Review* (NBR).

State List:

The "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" was first published in 1988 (NOU 1988) and has been updated three times (NOURC 1997, 2004, 2009). The "Official List" has been appended twenty-three times: (Mollhoff 1989; Grenon 1990, 1991; Gubanyi 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Brogie 1997, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2013; Jorgensen 2001, 2002, 2003).

The American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998) and its following supplements: (AOU: 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) contain many taxonomic changes affecting North American birds.

The following summarizes all 2013 revisions by the AOU in regards to changes in scientific names and changes in assignments to family and order of species to the most recently published "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009" (NOURC 2009, www.noubirds.org).

This report includes all accounts submitted during the 2013 calendar year covering 107 records with accession numbers 1500 -1606.

Criteria for Accepted Records:

In order for a record to be accepted, a minimum of six votes in favor is required with no more than one dissenting vote (NOURC 2010). Records in the following categories are classified as accepted:

I-S - a diagnostic, labeled specimen exists
I-P - diagnostic, labeled photographic evidence exists
I-R - a diagnostic, labeled recording exists

II - three or more independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist
III - one or two independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist

Each account of an accepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and initial(s) of observers. This report summarizes all records accessioned in 2013, discusses any new additions to the state list, and reports any changes in firmness of data of Nebraska birds. Additionally, the list reflects changes in frequency of occurrence, as determined by the NOU Records Committee, which reviewed records of bird occurrences in Nebraska for 2004-2013. Frequency of occurrence is indicated by the following terms (NOURC 2009):

Regular - acceptably reported in 9-10 of the past 10 years.
Casual - acceptably reported in 4-7 of the past 10 years.
Accidental - acceptably reported in 0-2 of the past 10 years.
Extirpated - not acceptably reported in the past 50 year.
Extinct - no longer found alive anywhere in the world.

The frequency of occurrence for any species that is acceptably reported in 3 or 8 of the last 10 years is discussed by the committee and placed in a category felt most appropriate by the committee.

With this report, the following changes are made to the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009" (NOURC 2009).

2013 Additions to State List:

There was one new species added in 2013.

Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*)
The first NOURC accepted Hooded Oriole, discovered (SD) in Garrison, Butler Co., 25-28 May 2013 was well documented.
1. Two photographs (Class I-P, SD via JC) were received from the discoverer of the adult male bird, taken 26 May 2013. Accession # 1532.
2. Photographs (Class I-P, MAB) of the bird, 27 May 2013. Accession # 1533.
3. Additional photographs (Class I-P, PD) 27 May 2013. Accession # 1534.
4. A video (Class I-P, JGJ) taken 28 May 2013. Accession # 1536.

Insert Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*) after Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) on the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska". Additional detailed information on this record can be found at: Gubanyi [NBR 81(4):161-164].

*** With this addition, the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" stands at **459** species.

Changes Involving Nebraska Species Due to Taxonomic Revisions (AOU 2013):

The Fifty-fourth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 2013) has effected the following changes to the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" (www.noubirds.org).

1. Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) becomes *Calidris subruficollis*

2. Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) becomes *Calidris pugnax*

3. The sequence of species within the genus *Calidris* is changed to the following:
   * Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)
   * Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*)
   * Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*)
   * Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*)
   * Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
   * Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)
   * Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)
   * Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)
   * Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)
   * White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)
   * Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Calidris subruficollis*)
   * Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)
   * Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*)
   * Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)

4. The order Charadriiformes is reorganized as follows:
   * Family Recurvirostridae: (Stilts and Avocets)
   * Family Charadriidae: (Plovers)
   * Family Scolopacidae: (Sandpipers and Phalaropes)
   * Family Stercorariidae: (Jaegers)
   * Family Alcidae: (Alcids)
   * Family Laridae: (Gulls and Terns)

5. The sequence of species within the Family Mimidae (Thrashers and Mockingbirds) is changed to the following:
   * Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)
   * Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)
   * Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)
   * Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)
   * Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottus*)

6. Sage Sparrow (*Artemisiospiza belli*) becomes Sagebrush Sparrow (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*).

Sage Sparrow has been split into Bell's Sparrow (*Artemisiospiza belli*) and Sagebrush Sparrow (*A. nevadensis*). Bell's Sparrow is found breeding in dry chaparral habitat in costal and interior California, western Nevada, and south to

Baja California. Sagebrush Sparrow is found breeding in the Great Basin desert sagebrush area from interior Washington, eastern Oregon, southern Idaho, western Wyoming, and northwestern Colorado south to parts of Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. "Most if not all vagrant records of 'Sage Sparrow' in the central and eastern parts of North America pertain to Sagebrush Sparrow" (Retter 2013).

Based on the description of the bird and geographic likelihood, the one NOURC accepted (Class III) record of Sage Sparrow (Stage and Stage 1990) pertains to Sagebrush Sparrow.

7. The sequence of the three *Haemorhous* finches is changed to the following:
   * House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
   * Purple Finch (*Haemorhous purpureus*)
   * Cassin's Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*)

2013 Changes in Frequency of Occurrence:

1. Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) changed from Casual to Regular
2. Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) changed from Casual to Regular

*** The NOURC no longer seeks documentation on the above two species.

Pre-2013 Accepted Records

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

1. An adult bird was observed and photographed (Class I-P, EH) in a wet meadow along the Missouri River, Richardson Co., 25 May & 02 June, 2010. Accession # 1523.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Selasphorus calliope*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, JB) on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 31 August 2012. Accession # 1540.

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

1. A video (Class I-P, MK) was received of a bird coming to a birdbath in Blair, Washington Co., 07 October 2012. Accession # 1506.

This constitutes the second NOURC accepted record for Acorn Woodpecker in Nebraska.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, KH) in Omaha, Douglas Co., 28 December 2012. Accession # 1500.

2013 Accepted Records:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

1. A single adult was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 21 June 2013. Accession # 1545.

Brant (*Branta bernicla*)

1. An adult bird (of the taxon *B. b. nigricans*) was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Lake Hastings, Adams Co., 02 February 2013. Accession # 1507.
2. An additional photo (Class I-P, MAB) was received of the above bird, observed 03 February 2013. Accession # 1509.

This bird may be the same individual as Accession # 1392 (Brogie 2012), a sub-adult "Black" Brant photographed (PD) at Lake Hastings on 04 March 2011.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Hultine WPA, Clay Co., 14 March 2013. Accession # 1522.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

1. A single adult male was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co., 08 March 2013. Accession # 1521.
2. A male was photographed (Class I-P, PS) at Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., 18 November 2013. Accession # 1586.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, JGJ) were received of a single bird at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 22 November 2013. Accession # 1596.

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JM, SM) were received of a single bird found at Standing Bear Lake, Douglas Co., 14 July 2013. Accession # 1547.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

1. A written description (Class III, LE) was received of two birds observed at Jack Sinn WMA, Saunders and Lancaster Cos., 21 August 2013. Accession # 1559.
2. A single adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 14 May 2013. Accession # 1600.
3. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 20 July 2013. Accession # 1601.

*** The NOURC no longer seeks documentation on this species.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*)

1. A written description (Class III, JY) was received of an adult bird observed below Fort Falls, along the Niobrara River, Cherry Co., 26 May 2013. Accession # 1541.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

A bird in winter plumage discovered (SB) at Lake Babcock, Platte Co., 12-17 November 2013 was well documented.

1. A photograph (Class I-P, PD) 12 November 2013. Accession # 1581.
2. A set of photographs (Class I-P, PR) 13 November 2013. Accession # 1583.
3. A photograph (Class I-P, KC) 17 November 2013. Accession # 1584.
4. A set of photographs (Class I-P, RD) 17 November 2013. Accession # 1585.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, JM, SM) at Lake North near Columbus, Platte Co., 19 May 2013. Accession # 1535.
2. A second winter bird was photographed (Class I-P, MW) at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 07 September 2013. Accession # 1590.

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, JGJ) at the Alma sewage lagoons, Harlan Co., 20 March 2013 and may be the same individual as the February bird listed below. Accession # 1524.
2. Photographs (Class I-P, PD) were received a bird at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 05 January 2013. Accession # 1556.
3. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at the Alma sewage lagoons, Harlan Co., 15 February 2013. Accession # 1557.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*)

1. A first winter bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Lake Ogallala, Keith Co., 01 February 2013. Accession # 1508.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)

The third NOURC accepted record of this gull species was discovered (CG, JGJ) at Lake Ogallala, Keith Co., 16 February 2013 and was well documented. The "purity" of this third year bird was discussed by committee members and by several outside experts. The opinion of the majority was that the appearance of the bird was consistent with a "pure" Glaucous-winged Gull, rather than a hybrid bird.

1. A set of photographs (Class I-P, CG) taken by one of the initial observers. Accession # 1513.
2. A video (Class I-P; JGJ) taken by the second initial observer. Accession # 1514.
3. Additional photographs (Class I-P, MAB) from 23 February 2013. Accession # 1517.
4. A single additional photograph (Class I-P, PD) from 18 February 2013. Accession # 1602.

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, SV) were received of a "grounded" bird found south of Chadron, Dawes Co., 02 September 2013. On 30 August, this area experienced wind gusts of 60 mph and 20 minutes of golf-ball sized hail resulting in a

7-inch-deep layer that may have contributed to temporarily incapacitating the bird. The jaeger was not relocated the following day. Accession # 1565.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

1. A 13 September 2013 photograph (Class I-P, PD) was received of the following bird. Accession # 1566.
2. A photograph (Class I-P, MW) was received (by the initial observer) of a single dark plumaged juvenile discovered at Capitol Beach Lake, Lancaster Co., 11 September 2013. Accession # 1571.
3. A photograph (Class I-P, PR) of the above bird, taken 15 September 2013, was also received. Accession # 1597.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

The second NOURC accepted record of this species was an immature male discovered (MM via RH, LR) in Shelton, Buffalo Co., and well documented during its limited stay.

1. Photographs and a video (Class I-P, PD) taken 14-15 September 2013 provided excellent details to establish species identification. Accession # 1567.
2. A set of close-up photographs (Class I-P, PR) taken 16 September 2013 was also received. Accession # 1568.

Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*)

Multiple documentations were received of the second NOURC accepted record of this species.

1. A first year male was photographed (Class I-P, GB, JB) on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 06 September 2013. Accession # 1561.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, KD) of the above bird, taken 07 September 2013. Accession # 1562.
3. A video (Class I-P, PD) from 06 September 2013. Accession # 1563.
4. A single additional photograph (Class I-P, PR) taken 18 September 2013. Accession # 1570.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Selasphorus calliope*)

1. A bird was photographed (Class I-P, KD) near Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co., 30 July 2013. Accession # 1553.
2. An additional photograph (Class I-P, EA) was received of the above bird, 02 August 2013. Accession # 1554.
3. A photograph (Class I-P, KS) was received of a bird observed at the Iain Nicolson Nature Center, Buffalo Co., 30 August 2013. Accession # 1560.
4. Photographs (Class I-P, BD, KS) were received of an individual bird coming to a feeder in Kearney, Buffalo Co., 24 September 2013. Accession # 1575.
5. A first year male was photographed (Class I-P, KD) near Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co., 29 August 2013. Accession # 1587.
6. An adult male was photographed (Class I-P, PD) near Mitchell, Scotts Bluff Co., 29 July 2013. Accession # 1603.

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, BA, DA) were received of a single bird observed at a suet feeder in Hayes Co., 15 & 16 June 2013. Accession # 1544.

This documents the third NOURC accepted record for Acorn Woodpecker in Nebraska.

Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class I-P, PD) in Banner Co., 21 September 2013. Accession # 1573.
2. A written description (Class III, JG) was received of a female bird observed in Banner Co., 22 September 2013. Accession # 1574.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, WRS) at Oliver Reservoir SRA, Kimball Co., 06 September 2013. Accession # 1564.
2. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) during the NOU Fall Field Trip in Kimball Co., 21 September 2013. Accession # 1572.
3. A second set of photographs (Class I-P, PD) of the 06 September 2013 bird was received. Accession # 1604.

Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co., 15 June 2013. Accession # 1542.
2. A hatching-year bird was netted, banded, and photographed (Class I-P, MN) at Chadron State Park, Dawes Co., 24 September 2013. Accession # 1577.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*)

1. A bird in first winter plumage was photographed (Class I-P, SM) at Standing Bear Lake, Douglas Co., 04 October 2013. Accession # 1576.

Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, MS) in Gering, Scotts Bluff Co., 23 February 2013. Accession # 1591. This is likely the same bird photographed (MS) at this location on 18 October 2012 (Brogie 2013).

Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, MS) in Gering, Scotts Bluff Co., 23 February 2013. Accession # 1592
2. A photograph (Class I-P, MS) was received of a bird present at the above location 23 October 2013. Accession # 1593.

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

1. A written description (Class III, TJW) was received of a single bird observed at North Platte, Lincoln Co., 13 August 2013. Accession # 1595.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, PR) near Homer, Dakota Co., 31 January 2013. Accession # 1511.
2. A written description (Class III, WF) was received of a bird observed along the Niobrara River in Boyd Co., 24 February 2013. Accession # 1519.
3. A written description (Class III, WF) was received of a bird observed along Lodgepole Creek, east of Potter, Cheyenne Co., 10 November 2013. Accession # 1579.
4. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Sutherland Reservoir, Lincoln Co., 11 November 2013. Accession # 1580.
5. Another photograph (Class I-P, MSS via TJW) was received of the Lincoln County bird (taken on the day of discovery), 10 November 2013. Accession # 1582.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, PD) were received of one bird (in a group of 11) at Pawnee Prairie, Pawnee Co., 01 April 2013. Accession # 1599.

Pine Warbler (*Setophaga pinus*)

1. A first year male was photographed (Class I-P, GB JB) on the south side of Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., early October 2013. Accession # 1578.

Black Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte atrata*)

1. Several birds were photographed (Class I-P, PD) on Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff Co., 04 January 2013. Accession # 1501.

Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)

1. A female was photographed (Class I-P, DG-C) coming to a feeder near Homer, Dakota Co., 17 January 2013. Accession # 1503.
2. An additional photograph (Class I-P, EMB) was received of the above bird, observed 28 January 2013. Accession # 1504.

Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JGJ) were received of an adult male at Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff Co., 26 July 2013. Accession # 1549.
2. An adult "green-backed" male was photographed (Class I-P, PD) at Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Scotts Bluff Co., 15 June 2013. Accession # 1606.

*** The NOURC no longer seeks documentation on this species.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)

1. A female was photographed (Class I-P, MP) at a feeder in Blair, Washington Co., 05 February 2013. Accession # 1510.
2. A photograph (Class I-P, PR) was received of the above bird taken 18 February 2013. Accession # 1515.
3. An additional photograph (Class I-P, PD) was received of the above bird observed 22 February 2013. Accession # 1605.

Unaccepted Records:

Records in the following categories are considered unaccepted (NOURC 2010):
IV - probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt.
V - a record with insufficient evidence to support the identification claimed.
VI - a probable released or escaped bird or mistaken identification.

Each account of an unaccepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and reasons for the committee's non-acceptance of the record.

Unaccepted Records (Received in 2013):

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

1. A written description was received of a first year bird observed at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 15 September 2013 and although possibly correct, the record lacked sufficient details for acceptance. Class IV. (5 III, 3 IV). Accession # 1569.

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)

1. Photographs were received of a bird at Holmes Lake, Lancaster Co., 17 April 2013. Many committee members stated that the photographs provided were lacking in detail for a definitive identification to species. Class V. (2 I-P, 2 IV, 2 V, 1 VI, 1 Abstain). Accession # 1546.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)

1. A single first basic bird was photographed at Sutherland Reservoir, Lincoln Co., 01 March 2001. Although the photographs provided were very suggestive of the species and possibly correct, they were lacking in quality for approval. Class IV. (5 I-P, 2 IV, 1 Abstain). Accession # 1543.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

1. An *Archilochus* sp. was photographed at a feeder near Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 28 July 2013. Most committee members believed the photograph provided did not sufficiently rule out the more likely Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*A. colubris*). Class V. (2 I-P, 4 IV, 2V). Accession # 1555.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*)

1. A description of a bird observed at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 20 July 2013 was very suggestive of the species but lacked sufficient details to rule out a possible Cliff Swallow (*P. pyrrhonota*). Class V. (3 III, 2-IV, 3 V). Accession # 1548.

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

1. A written description received of two birds observed fighting near Doane College, Saline Co., August 2012 was suggestive but lacked sufficient details for acceptance. Class V. (2 III, 3 IV, 3-V). Accession # 1538.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

1. A single bird was observed by several individuals in Omaha, Douglas Co., for several days in late December 2012. However, the photographs received of this bird (taken 28 December 2012) lacked sufficient quality for acceptance. Class V. (2 I-P, 3 IV, 2 V, 1 Abstain). Accession # 1500.

Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)

1. A written description was received of a bird observed at Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff Co., 16 July 2013 that was very suggestive of the species but lacked sufficient details for approval. Class IV. (4 III, 3 IV, 1 V). Accession # 1558.

Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni*)

1. Photographs and a written description were received of a single bird observed near Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 02 January 2013. Although the materials received were very suggestive of Hoary Redpoll, several committee members felt the record was lacking in sufficient details to absolutely rule out the possibility of the bird being a Common Redpoll (A. flammea). Class IV. (5 I-P, 3 IV). Accession # 1505.
2. A photograph of a single bird at North Platte, Lincoln Co., 18 January 2013 was suggestive but lacked sufficient details for approval. (4 I-P, 2 IV, 2 V). Accession #1551.
3. A set of photographs was received of a bird observed west of Burwell, Garfield Co., 18 March 2013 lacked sufficient details for approval (4 I-P, 3 IV, 1 V). Accession # 1552.

Non-Review List Records Submitted in 2013 and Filed Without Votes:

The following records are those of species not on the NOURC Review List. They have been accessioned due to other circumstances (out-of range, non-normal date of occurrence, unusual nesting record, etc.) and filed without NOURC votes.

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)

1. A photograph (PD) of a female bird observed at Scottsbluff sewage lagoon, Scotts Bluff Co., 19 February 2013 was filed. Accession # 1516.
2. A written description and video (JR) of an eastward bird observed at Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 02 March 2013 was filed. Accession # 1520.

Gray Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)

1. A photograph (MAB) of two birds south of Creighton, Antelope Co., 25 April 2013 was filed. Reports of this species in Nebraska have declined in recent years. Accession # 1528.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

1. Photographs (SS) of a pair of birds nest-building near Summit Lake WMA, Burt Co., 08 June 2013 were filed. Accession # 1539.

This is the first documented nesting attempt for Osprey in eastern Nebraska in more than 100 years.

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)

1. Two photographs (MS) were received of an adult bird along Old Hill State Road in the Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co., 11 May 2013. Accession # 1594.

There have been sightings of this species at this location in 2006, 2008, and 2012 (KD).

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

1. A single adult bird was photographed (MAB) east of Niobrara, Knox Co., 13 April 2013. Accession # 1526.

This represents one of the very few records for this species in northeastern Nebraska.

Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)

1. A single bird was photographed (SM) west of Omaha, Sarpy Co., 13 April 2013. Accession # 1527.

This species is rarely encountered in eastern Nebraska.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

1. A second year bird was photographed (MAB) east of Niobrara, Knox Co., 21 May 2013. Accession # 1529.

This represents one of the very few records for this species in northeastern Nebraska.

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythropthalmus*)

1. A single adult bird was photographed (MAB) northwest of Verdigre, Knox Co., 25 May 2013. Accession # 1530.

Although this species' status is still considered Regular in Nebraska, numbers of occurrences have dramatically declined in recent years.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

1. A single bird was photographed (MAB) in Winnetoon, Knox Co., 02 April 2013. Accession # 1525.

This species is infrequently encountered in eastern Nebraska.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

1. A photograph (Class I-P, CK) was received of an adult male discovered (JR) in Omaha, Douglas Co., and present 29-30 July 2013. Accession # 1550.
2. A female/immature bird was photographed (Class I-P, JGJ) in Lincoln, Lancaster Co., 20 November 2013. Accession # 1588.
3. An adult male in Lincoln was photographed (Class I-P, JGJ) later on the same day and at the same location as the above bird. Accession # 1589.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*)

1. A photograph (JM) of a female bird in Hamilton Co., 19 May 2013 was filed. Accession # 1531.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)

1. A single bird of the western "Audubon's" (*S. c. auduboni*) race was photographed (MAB) below Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 23 February 2013. Accession # 1518.

This represents the first winter record for this subspecies in Nebraska.

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*)

1. A photograph (SO) was filed of a "late" bird at a feeder, in Omaha, Douglas Co., 30 November 2013. Accession # 1598.

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*)

1. A photograph (PD) of a mid-winter bird observed in Carter Canyon, Scotts Bluff Co., 04 January 2013 was filed. Accession # 1502.

Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*)

1. A written description (JT) of a wintering bird observed in Omaha, Douglas Co., 12 February 2013 was filed. Accession # 1512.

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

1. An adult male was photographed (CJ) at Hideaway Acres, north of Crofton, Knox Co., 26 May 2013. Accession # 1537.

This species is infrequently encountered in eastern Nebraska.

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FALL FIELD REPORT, August-November 2014

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INTRODUCTION

My first paragraph from last year's fall report read as follows:

> "In most ways, this was a routine fall season. Most interesting from an ongoing point of view were quite a large number of sightings of passerines at rather late dates, notably among Empidonax flycatchers, wood warblers native sparrows, tanagers, towhees, grosbeaks, and buntings."

This fall was no different; the trend seems to be that final sighting dates for many species are pushing against their latest expected dates.

There were several tidbits of interest, more or less unrelated, but perhaps the most notable takeaways for the season were the number of species that had rare records either east or west of their usual ranges and the several state-level rarities. As with last year, there were some excellent record or near-record high counts for a few species.

The aforementioned "tidbits" follow. Evidence is accumulating that Mute Swan may soon land on the NOU Official State List; occurrences that fit wild provenance are discussed in the species account. Redheads bred in the Rainwater Basin for only the 4th time. There is discussion of a very strange Pectoral Sandpiper (Sandpipers?) in Dakota County that no doubt will be a source of puzzlement for some observers Late broods included 3 record late groups of nestling Barn Owls taken to Fontenelle Forest Raptor Recovery 15 Oct-6 Nov, and an Eastern Wood-Pewee brood 13 Sep. Pine Siskins were nowhere in the state until September, not even in their usual Panhandle pinewoods habitats.

Rare records east or west of usual ranges included Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Field Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird. Counts of note included 400 Forster's Terns, two large flocks of Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos (117 and 79), 80 Pinyon Jays, 22 Sage Thrashers reported in all, and 300 Great-tailed Grackles. Three erratic winter species appeared, but only 1-2 of each: Mountain Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, and Evening Grosbeak, all in the west.

Of the rarities, most exciting was the presence of male and female American Three-toed Woodpeckers in East Ash Canyon, Dawes County, discovered by Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory surveyors and re-found by several Nebraska observers; these are the 3rd and 4th for Nebraska. It is unknown if they are a pair; they were not seen together. The 6th state record Black-throated Sparrow appeared in Virginia Clark's yard, which is becoming a rare bird magnet, with photos to back up its claim. Rare jaegers and gulls showed well: there were 2 separate Long-tailed Jaegers, 9th and 10th for the state, the 19th state Little Gull, and the 22nd state Laughing Gull

Perhaps as rare as any of these was a White-rumped Sandpiper, a species not supposed to be in the interior in fall.

Finally, a note about eBird data. Many Nebraska observers, and a fairly large number of visitors from other states, report to eBird. I check eBird records for every species as I write these Seasonal Reports and find the extra data very useful in rounding out the reports. However, the vast majority of the reports cited by me in this Fall Report still came from NEBirds and reports of the season sent directly to me. Out of curiosity, I counted the cited records and found that only 18% came from eBird; the rest were from local sources.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
ADF: Arbor Day Farm, Nebraska City
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBL: Capitol Beach L, Lincoln
Cem: Cemetery
Co(s): County(ies)
CL: Carter L, Omaha
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co
CSP: Chadron SP, Dawes Co
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Knox/Cedar Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res SRA, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave State Park, Richardson/Nemaha Cos
imm: immature
juv: juvenile
L: Lake
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LNB: Lakes North and Babcock, Platte Co
LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co
m. ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NM: National Monument
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
NOU: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
Res: Reservoir
PP: Pioneers Park, Lancaster Co
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore, and Thayer Cos
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SHP: State Historical Park

SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
SRA: State Recreation Area
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area
WSR: Wind Springs Ranch, Sioux Co

GAZETTEER

Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Lancaster and Saunders Cos
Oliver Res: SRA, Kimball Co
Sandhills: large area of sand-based prairie in north-central Nebraska

OBSERVERS

AB: Allen Boynton, Raleigh, NC
AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff
AF: Andrew Furman, Kearney
AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering
AM: April Murphy, Spalding
AP: Alexander Patia, Springfield, IL
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue
AV: Adam Vesely, Denver, CO
B&DW: Bruce & Donna Walgren, Casper, WY
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
BR: Brandon Reo, Howell, NJ
BRo: Brooks Rownd, Hilo, HI
BS: Barbara Straus, Lincoln
BW: Bruce Wendorff, Lincoln
BWe: Bob Wells, Omaha
CC: Charlotte Croshaw, Fremont
CG: Chris Goulart, Aurora, CO
CH: Connie Hoffman, Dalton
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
CO: Chris Olson, Papillion
CW: Cole Wolf, Albuquerque, NM
CWi: Connie Wilson, Ballwin, MO
D&JP: Don & Jan Paseka, Ames
DB: Doug Begole, Adkins, TX
DD: David Dowell, Longmont, CO
DK: Doug Kibbe, Littleton, CO
DT: David True, Yankton, SD

EA: Edward Allen, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EBr: Ed Brogie, Laurel
EH: Eddie Hicks, North Platte
GL: Gary Lingle, Gibbon
GM: Gwen Moore, Lakewood, CO
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
HG: Holly Garrod, Evergreen, CO
J&GB: Jay & Ginger Belsan, Ogallala
J&JH: James & Judy Haver, Gothenburg
JB: Jeff Birek, Fort Collins, CO
JBo: James Boccia, Scarborough, ON
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JCr: Jonathan Crews, Omaha
JD: Jeff Dawson, Denver, CO
JDr: Jeff Drahota, Lincoln
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JL: Josh Lefever, Lititz, PA
JMa: John Manning, Norfolk
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JT: Jackson Trappett, Grand Junction, CO
JV: John Vanderpoel, Niwot, CO
JWh: Juanita Whittecar, Chadron
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KDy: Keith Dyche, Shenandoah, IA
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
KSc: Kathy Schwery, Plattsmouth
KSh: Ken Shuster, Fremont
KW: Karen Wagoner, Bellevue
L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LB: Laurel Badura, Kearney
LDe: Linda Deeds, North Platte
LDW: Laurie DeWispelaere, Glennallen, AK
LDz: Lauren Deriaz, Burlington, WI
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LF: Larry Falk, Nebraska City
LL: Lucas Laeser, Los Alamos, NM
LR: Larry Randolph, Kearney
LRo: Les Roslund, Easton, MD
LW: Liz Wickemeyer, Omaha
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MC: Matthew Cvetas, Evanston, IL
MG: Mackenzie Goldthwait, Littleton, CO
MH: Mike Henwood, Grand Junction, CO
MP: Melissa Panella, Lincoln

MS: Marie Smith, Gering
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
NA: Noah Arthur, Lincoln
ND: Nancy Drilling, Rapid City, SD
PR: Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA
RC: Robert Chase, Durham, NC
RD: Roger Dietrich, Yankton, SD
RDe: Roseanna Denton, Science Hill, KY
RH: Robin Harding, Kearney
RM: Robert Manning, Omaha
RMe: Ryan Merrill, Kirkland, WA
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSg: Ruben Siegfried, Scottsbluff
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
RT: Rob Tyser, La Crosse, WI
SC: Steven Courtney, Santa Barbara, CA
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SSc: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
T&MF: Todd & Meg Frantz, Seward
TF: Tom Forwood, Sheridan, MT
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TS: Travis Sherman, Gordon
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
WF: William Flack, Madison
WK: William Kaempfer, Boulder, CO
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: No large numbers were reported; largest flocks were flyovers of 110 and 65 in Lancaster Co 25 Oct (LE). This species is rare in the west in fall; 7 were at Chappell L, Deuel Co, 29 Nov (WK, GM).

Snow Goose: First fall flock noted was the 75 over southeastern Washington Co 25 Oct (JR), about on time.

Ross's Goose: The 1-2 at BOL during summer were still present 21 Nov (LE, MW, RSt), at which time no flocks of Snows or Ross's had been reported there. One at CLNWR 21 Sep (SJD) may have summered there.

Cackling Goose: Three at Holdrege 31 Aug "seemed normal" (LR, RH), but provided a rare summer sighting. Next reported were 4 in Cheyenne Co 14 Oct (CG) and 12 in Dodge Co 16 Oct (CC).

Canada Goose: Best count was the 6500 at CL 21 Nov (JR); all counts over 500 were in Nov, suggesting a strong migratory component of fall birds. High fall counts are 20,000-40,000.

Egyptian Goose: One at BOL 6 Oct was "rather tame", but could fly (LE, MW); this bird was likely released or escaped, although there are now established populations in North America.

Mute Swan: Sightings this fall suggestive of wild birds were of an extremely wary, unmarked pair in western Dixon Co 8 Nov (BFH), and a "light juv" in western Douglas Co 25 Nov (JR). Most recent sightings of Mute Swan have been in fall, suggestive of wild provenance. An ad at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, 15 Sep-8 Nov (CNK, CO, DB) was less likely to be wild, but continued the series of sightings of ad Mute Swans in the Omaha area.

Trumpeter Swan: Eight returned to CL 21 Nov (JR), and 9 ads and 7 juvs were there 28 Nov (BP). A peak of 30 wintered at CL during winter 2013-2014. One of 3 in Arthur Co 22 Oct had a reddish collar (WM), typical of birds released in Iowa.

Tundra Swan: None of this rare statewide fall migrant were reported.

Wood Duck: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Gadwall: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

American Wigeon: A probable hybrid male with Mallard was near North Platte 11 Nov (TJW).

American Black Duck: A male was at BOL 29 Nov (LE), a little westerly for this rare fall migrant. A brief look and an equivocal photo of a male of either this species or Mottled Duck in Lincoln Co 15 Nov did not allow certain identification (NA); there are very few westerly reports of American Black Duck (3 in the Panhandle) and none for Mottled, although the latter may have been overlooked or misidentified.

Mallard: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant.

Blue-winged Teal: Last reported was rather late in Lincoln Co 11 Nov (TJW); last dates are 15-19 Nov.

Cinnamon Teal: None were reported of this uncommon summer resident and fall migrant. Once molt in males begins in early Aug, this species is difficult to separate from Blue-winged Teal.

Northern Shoveler: Reports were routine for this common, mostly northern, summer resident and abundant statewide fall migrant.

Northern Pintail: Starting in late Jul, molt migrants may arrive in Nebraska, such as the 2 birds in western Douglas Co 28 Aug (JR). Breeding is rare away from the Sandhills.

Green-winged Teal: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant.

Canvasback: Three females in Gosper Co 23 Sep (PR) were rather early; early dates are 23-24 Sep for true migrants. The large count of 89 at CLNWR 21 Sep (SJD) is suggestive of early migrants also, although this species breeds in the western Sandhills.

Redhead: A fem with 5 young at North Lake Basin, Seward Co, 16 Aug (JGJ) was one of only 4 breeding records for the RWB since the 1960s. One in Gosper Co 24 Aug (LR, RH) was early; usual early dates are 13-18 Sep.

Ring-necked Duck: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant.

Greater Scaup: One in Lancaster Co 11 Oct (MW) was one of only 3 records earlier than the early dates of 20-25 Oct.

Lesser Scaup: One in Lancaster Co 16 Sep (MW) was rather early; early dates are 9-13 Sep. Breeding has not been proven in Nebraska (fide WM), despite the usual presence of small numbers summering in the western Sandhills; reports of such birds were of 1-3 at CLNWR 3 Aug-2 Sep (m. ob.).

Surf Scoter: At least 7 were reported, a good showing: 1-3 were in the GPD area 4 Oct (PR, RD photo) through 2 Nov (DT), two imms were at LO 7-9 Oct (TJW, JGJ), a fem/imm was at Holmes L, Lancaster Co, 1-3 Nov (LE, TG), and a single was in Jefferson Co 13 Nov (JGJ). The GPD bird on 4 Oct was a new early date, and the LO birds, seen 3 days later were 3rd-earliest.

White-winged Scoter: None were reported of this rare statewide fall migrant.

Black Scoter: There were 3 reported, a normal fall: a fem/imm was near Niobrara 1 Nov (MB), an ad fem was at Louisville Lakes SRA, Cass Co, 21-28 Nov (CNK, m. ob.), and a single was in Sarpy Co 27-29 Nov (L&BP, KW, EB, CO).

Long-tailed Duck: The only report was of a fem at Capitol Beach L, Lancaster Co, 11-27 Nov (LE, MW).

Bufflehead: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Common Goldeneye: Reports were routine for this common statewide migrant.

Barrow's Goldeneye: There were 3 reports of "possible" fems, all in the east and all with yellow or orange bills 14-25 Nov; a photo submitted of one of the birds suggests Common Goldeneye as the bird lacks the bulbous "forehead" of Barrow's Goldeneye.

Hooded Merganser: One to two fem/imm birds at CLNWR 31 Aug (JT, DK, JD, MG) were not unexpected; such presumed pre-breeders occur in summer statewide.

Common Merganser: The usual small flock present in recent years continued from summer at LO, with up to 11 birds (m. ob.); these are likely molt migrants.

Red-breasted Merganser: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

Ruddy Duck: Unexpected was a pair with the male in basic plumage in southern Phelps Co 10 Aug (LR, RH), and two were at CBL 30 Aug (MW). These reports may have been of failed breeders that moved south on molt migration; true migrants arrive in mid-Sep. The 1645 at BOL 5 Nov (LE) was a record high fall count.

Northern Bobwhite: Northern and western reports included one at Pressey WA, Custer Co, 21 Aug (TJW) and 8 southeast of Broken Bow, Custer Co, 25 Aug (TH), where the species is uncommon. Singles along Blue Creek near CLNWR 3 Aug (DD) and along Lodgepole Creek in Cheyenne Co 10 Aug (WF) were unexpected.

Gray Partridge: The only report was of 11 near Randolph in Cedar Co 11 Oct (JGJ); reports of this species in the last few years suggest the population is at a low ebb.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Numbers of this species continue to be moderate at best; only one was seen during fall harvest in Dodge Co (D&JP).

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Numbers have slowly increased in the southern Panhandle since about 1995; encouraging were 10 in western Kimball Co 25 Aug (WF).

Greater Prairie-Chicken: The small population at SCP persists; singles were there 20 Sep (MW) and 25 Oct (EB).

Wild Turkey: Highest counts are, as expected, in fall, when flocks form; 94 were near Brady in Lincoln Co 10 Nov (TJW).

Red-throated Loon: The two reports for this less-than-annual migrant were only the 18th and 19th for fall: a juv was at BOL 5 Nov (LE) and one was at PL 13 Nov (JGJ, MW).

Pacific Loon: Two of this annual but rare fall migrant were reported: an ad basic-plumaged bird in Lincoln Co 3 Nov (TJW) and likely the same individual at BOL, 3 and 7 Nov (LE).

Common Loon: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide migrant.

Pied-billed Grebe: Best count was the 150 at BOL 4 Oct (MW); high counts are 475-860.

Horned Grebe: Adults molt into basic plumage Jun-Oct, and so reports late Jun-early Aug in Nebraska may refer to early migrants that have completed molt, likely failed breeders. An example this fall was the 3 birds in fresh basic plumage photographed in Garden Co 3 Aug 2014 (DD). Early dates of migrants are in late Aug, with most first arrivals in mid-Sep.

Red-necked Grebe: One-two apparent imms were at LO 17 Oct-15 Nov (RC, WF, NA) and 2 first-winters were at PL 12 Nov (LE), a typical showing in recent years.

Eared Grebe: Reports were routine for this common statewide fall migrant.

Western Grebe: A single "young bird" in Scotts Bluff Co 16 Aug (KD) raised the question of local breeding, but was likely off course, as juvs move as soon as flighted to aggregations at staging areas by late Jul. Best-known staging area in the state is LM, where there were estimates of 37,000 on 21 Sep (SJD) and 21,000 on 24 Sep (JDr fide JGJ). High fall counts are 35,000-44,000, all in the short period 21-27 Sep. A few easterly stragglers were rather late; one was in western Douglas Co 25 Nov (JR).

Clark's Grebe: Two were on LO 15-21 Sep (L&BP, LE) and one was there 19 Oct (WF). A single rather late Aechmophorus grebe in Dodge Co 27 Nov (KSh photo, D&JP, GR) had black feathering extending below its eye, but its bill was orange; it was likely an intermediate.

Double-crested Cormorant: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant.

American White Pelican: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant.

American Bittern: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide migrant.

Least Bittern: The only report was of one in Grant Co 8 Aug (WF); this species might be expected more to the east in Nebraska, but water conditions are the key determinant of its distribution. There are numerous reports from the Sandhills, where it is not uncommon.

Great Blue Heron: The 52 in Dakota Co 14 Aug (JJ) was typical of late summer aggregations; high fall counts are 102-160.

Great Egret: Best count reported was also 52, and also in Dakota Co, 15 Aug (RD); high counts are 130-150.

Snowy Egret: A total of 9 were reported, west to HCR and Buffalo Co, 3 Aug-2 Oct (m. ob.), a moderate showing. None were reported Jun-Jul.

Little Blue Heron: The only report was of an imm at BOL 29 Sep-1 Oct (LE), the only one reported for the summer-fall period.

Cattle Egret: Large counts have been scarce in recent years; best count this fall was only 51, at BOL 29 Sep (LE), whereas all-time high counts are 450-591.

Green Heron: One in Scotts Bluff Co 29 Aug (JBo) is only the 9th summer-fall record for the Panhandle, all in the Jun-Aug period.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: None were reported of this rare eastern summer and fall visitor.

Glossy Ibis: After 6 reports in spring, there were none in summer or fall; this species is difficult to identify once it loses spring breeding plumage.

White-faced Ibis: The 8 in Fillmore Co 18 Oct were record late for the RWB (JGJ), but even later were unexpected Nov reports: singles were in Clay Co 4 Nov (fide JGJ) and Saunders Co 11 Nov (JGJ). These are the 4th and 5th Nov records for the state; there is one early Dec record.

Turkey Vulture: One over Lancaster Co 20 Nov (BW) was rather late; late dates are 30 Nov-2 Dec, but there are only 13 records 30 Oct-2 Dec and the species is rare after about 20 Oct. Apparently it has yet to adapt to frozen foods.

Osprey: One fishing in the lake at Buckskin WMA, Dixon Co, 12 Aug (DT) was rather early; early dates are 12-13 Aug. One at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, 8 Nov (CNK, L&BP) was rather late, but even later was one in Hall Co 16 Nov (LL); late dates are 19-21 Nov.

Mississippi Kite: The usual reports were received from the Ogallala stronghold, with a peak of 10 birds including juvs 14 Aug (JO) and last sighting on 6 Sep of 3 ads (MW). Nesting continued in North Platte for the 4th year, with 5 birds present at 9th and Buffalo 6 Aug (TJW); 2 birds were along West Leota St in North Platte 28 Aug (SSc). Other locations where summering has occurred in recent years had sightings this year: 2-3 were in Benkelman 13-25 Aug (CNK, JGJ) and 2 were in Imperial 24 Aug (JGJ, D&JP). Migrants are reported starting in late Aug: an imm was in Grand Island 24 Aug (TH), one was over Lincoln 26 Aug (NA), and one was in Omaha 1 Sep (CO). Intriguing was a pair seen from I-80 west of Gothenburg in Lincoln Co 10 Aug (SC), perhaps indicative of nesting there.

Bald Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide resident and common statewide fall migrant.

Northern Harrier: Fall arrival in areas where breeding is unlikely is in early Sep; singles were in Lancaster Co 5 Sep (LE) and Nemaha Co 6 Sep (SQ).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Arrival is in early Sep; first reported were singles in Douglas Co 1 Sep (JCr), Lancaster Co 5 Sep (MW), Scotts Bluff Co 6 Sep (HG), and Banner Co 7 Sep (MW). Late Aug sightings are questionable due to the year-round presence of Cooper's Hawks.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine for this fairly common resident and migrant.

Northern Goshawk: None were reported of this rare statewide migrant.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Only one report was received, of a juv near Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 12 Aug (LE); this species is a very low-density breeder in southeastern Nebraska, with breeding records only from Fontenelle Forest and PL in recent years.

Broad-winged Hawk: A juv accompanied by an adult was near Wright's Gap, Scotts Bluff Co, 16 Aug; pairs have been seen in this area in previous years, but without evidence of breeding (KD). Breeding in the west has occurred only in North Platte. Unexpected were 3 Panhandle reports 22-23 Sep by an experienced observer (SJD), only the 16th-18th fall Panhandle records. Westerly reports of this species during migration have become more numerous in recent years.

Swainson's Hawk: Migration was thought to be later than usual in Dodge Co; 20+ was the peak there, on 12 Oct (D&JP), strangely the only double-digit count reported. High counts (in the thousands) are centered around late Sep-early Oct.

Red-tailed Hawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident and locally abundant migrant. Reports were routine for Harlan's, Western, and Krider's forms.

Ferruginous Hawk: One arrived as early as 16 Sep at a favored location, Prairie Dog WMA, Phelps Co, (WF); usually at least one bird winters there each year. Early easterly dates are 10-15 Sep. The rare dark form was reported from Hayes Co 25 Oct (JGJ).

Rough-legged Hawk: One in Scotts Bluff Co 25 Sep (RSg) was rather early; early dates are 14-16 Sep.

Golden Eagle: Breeding is generally restricted to the Panhandle, and the species is very rare eastward until Oct; one in Thomas Co 17 Aug (RMe) was likely a failed breeder or imm. Until recently, almost all easterly sightings in fall were of imms, but ads are being reported more frequently; one was over Omaha 27 Oct (JR). An imm was over Douglas Co 22 Oct (LW, ARy).

Virginia Rail: Reports were routine for this uncommon northern resident and fairly common statewide migrant.

Sora: An ad with 3 fluffy chicks was in Dakota Co 16 Aug (SMa); this species breeds over most of the state but is more common northward. Last reported was one in Polk Co 15 Oct (JGJ); Soras are rare after this date.

American Coot: Best count reported was an impressive 5000 at CL 23 Oct (JR); high fall counts are 6007-17,359.

Sandhill Crane: Early dates are 31 Aug-3 Sep, and so the 10 over Valley Co 18 Aug (LRo) was exceptional. Rare in the east, the 100 over Dakota Co 9 Nov (BFH) was a surprise.

Whooping Crane: Reports were routine of this mostly central, locally uncommon migrant.

Black-bellied Plover: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide migrant.

American Golden-Plover: Westerly was one at LM 7 Oct (JGJ); virtually all fall reports are from the central and east.

Snowy Plover: There were only 4 previous fall records of Snowy Plover away from a known breeding site, but this fall one was at North Platte SL 21 Sep (LE), and 1-2 juvs were at Swanson Res, Hitchcock Co, 25 Aug (JGJ). One was still present at Swanson Res 3 Sep (JGJ), which is intriguing in that breeding may have occurred there. There are only 3 sites where breeding has occurred: LM, HCR, and the John J. Dinan Memorial Bird Conservation Area in Buffalo Co.

Semipalmated Plover: One in Fillmore Co 15 Oct (JGJ) was tardy, but another in Seward Co 25 Oct (T&MF) was 3rd-latest on record for fall.

Piping Plover: Best tally was the 13, including several juvs, at LM 31 Aug (MG, JD, DK). Breeding occurs at LM whenever water levels are low enough to expose sandy shoreline.

Killdeer: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Black-necked Stilt: The 5 in Sheridan Co 24 Aug (JGJ) provided only the 16th record after 11 Aug for this early-departing fall migrant.

American Avocet: A near-record high for fall was the 1020 in Sheridan Co 21 Sep (SJD); high is 1100. One at BOL 5 Nov (LE) was rather late; last dates are 7-10 Nov.

Spotted Sandpiper: The 4 counted in Lancaster Co 15 Oct (LE) were rather late; last dates are 19-22 Oct.

Solitary Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Greater Yellowlegs: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Willet: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Upland Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Long-billed Curlew: Most are gone by Aug, although there are a few dates as late as Sep, and so the 8 in Sheridan Co 17 Aug (RMe) was noteworthy.

Marbled Godwit: Easterly reports in fall are fewer than 30 in all; thus one in Phelps Co 20 Sep (TEL, BS) was a good find.

Ruddy Turnstone: This species is less-than-annual in fall. Ads arrive first, in late Jul, and there are only 11 such records through 5 Aug, except for one later of an alternate plumaged ad 22 Aug. Thus an ad in Fillmore Co 25 Aug (JGJ) was a new late date and latest for ads. Juvs have been recorded only 22 times, all 15 Aug-19 Sep; a presumed juv was in western Douglas Co 30-31 Aug (MW, m. ob.).

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Dunlin: None were reported of this uncommon statewide fall migrant.

Baird's Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: This species, like Hudsonian Godwit, is not expected in fall, although, like Hudsonian, there are a few documented records. Only the 9th in all was one molting from alternate to basic plumage in Lancaster Co 7 Aug (MW).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Rare westward, 4 in Hitchcock Co 25 Aug (JGJ) and 5 there 3 Sep (JGJ) were noteworthy.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Two odd-looking shorebirds identified as Pectoral Sandpipers (JGJ, SJD), were seen by several and photographed 13-17 Aug in Dakota Co (BFH, m. ob.). The first sighting was of a bird whose plumage was in very poor condition, presumably caused by abrasion from a fishing line. A presumed second bird, photographed 16-17 Aug, took on a bizarre appearance after bathing (KDy, photo), prompting speculation as to its identity. Following the laws of parsimony, however, there may have been only one bird involved in these sightings, a Pectoral Sandpiper that had suffered serious plumage damage and possible staining.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Western Sandpiper: Only 6 were reported of this fairly common fall migrant: singles in Hitchcock Co 25 Aug (JGJ) and Sarpy Co 26 Aug (EB), and two at both CLNWR 31 Aug (MG, JD, DK) and in Lincoln Co (EH).

This putative Pectoral Sandpiper was in Dakota Co 13-17 Aug, 2014; here photographed by Keith Dyche 16 Aug after it had bathed.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide fall migrant.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: Migrants may appear as early as late Jul, but most do not arrive until late Aug. One at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 2-10 Aug (MW, CW) was likely a migrant, but breeding has occurred in that county. Five in Sarpy Co 10 Aug (MC) were also likely migrants, but with the same caveat.

American Woodcock: The only report was of one in Dodge Co 9 Nov (D&JP); last dates are 18-20 Nov.

Wilson's Phalarope: The 950 at Lakeside, Sheridan Co, (MW) was impressive, although high fall counts can be huge: 2000-6200.

Red-necked Phalarope: Uncommon in the east, there were a few reports: one was at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 10 Aug (MW), 1-3 were at Capitol Beach L, Lancaster Co, 9 Sep-1 Oct (NA, MW, LE), and 5 were at PL 20 Sep (MW).

Long-tailed Jaeger: There are now 10 records of this species, all in fall, all but one since 1998, and 5 of these since 2010. This fall's pair were a cooperative juv at CBL 28 Aug-15 Sep (MW photo, m. ob.) and an ad at LM 31 Aug (JT photo, WK, MG, JD, DK).

This juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger, Nebraska's 9th record of this species, was at Capitol Beach Lake, Lancaster Co, 25 Aug-15 Sep (here photographed by Michael Willison 30 Aug).

Sabine's Gull: A typical fall saw at least 25 reports of 1-4 birds from 8 locations statewide 2 Sep-14 Oct (m. ob.). Best count was 4, at CBL 16 Sep (MW). All reports were of the expected juvs except for a single ad, at GPD 14 Sep (MB, DT), only the 6th ad for Nebraska.

Bonaparte's Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Little Gull: A cooperative juv spent a few days at GPD 31 Aug-14 Sep (DT, m. ob., JC photo). This is the 14th fall record for Nebraska, 19th overall.

This juvenile Little Gull was below Gavins Point Dam, Cedar County, Nebraska, 31 Aug-14 Sep, 2014 (DT, m. ob.), here photographed by John Carlini 2 Sep.

Laughing Gull: Apparently the same juv was reported from CBL 29-30 Aug (NA, MW) and BOL 1 Sep (LE). There are now 20 documented records 2 Apr-20 Oct, plus single Dec and Jan records.

Franklin's Gull: The 55,000 at Sutherland Res, Keith Co, 21 Sep (SJD), while impressive, pales before the all-time highs of 85,000 – 300,000.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide fall migrant.

California Gull: As expected, most reports were of ads from LM (m. ob.), where peak count was 28 on 22 Aug (JGJ); the only other record was of an ad at GPD 28-29 Nov (BFH, MW).

Herring Gull: Most ads do not appear until early Oct, but there are about 5 records late Jul-Sep. This fall added two more: 29 Aug in Lancaster Co (MW, details) and 6 Sep at LO (MW, details). Even imms don't begin to arrive until mid-Sep, and so early were a first-year bird in Cherry Co 11 Aug (L&BP) and 3 imms in Loup Co 23 Aug (RSt).

Thayer's Gull: The only reports for the fall period were of single first-year birds in Douglas Co rather early 1 Nov (JR) and at GPD 28-30 Nov (BFH, SMa, MW).

Iceland (Kumlien's) Gull: An interesting ad gull well-photographed (MW) at GPD 28-29 Nov (BFH, MW) was most likely an intermediate between Thayer's and Kumlien's Gulls. Such birds are probably under-reported, but require excellent photographs to identify.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: There were at least 4 of this now-annual spring and fall migrant reported; a 3rd-cycle bird at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 10-11 Aug (L&BP) was almost certainly the bird found there 23-25 Jul (SMa). Two ads were at LM 7 Oct (TJW), and a 3rd-cycle bird at BOL 14-22 Nov (NA, m. ob.) was possibly the same bird seen at CBL 22 Nov (MW).

Glaucous Gull: The only report was of a first-year that arrived rather early at GPD 16 Nov (DT) and remained through the period (m. ob.); there are only 3 earlier dates.

Least Tern: Reports were from known breeding locations, none of obvious migrants; latest were 2 at LM 10 Sep (MW). Last dates are in mid-Sep.

Caspian Tern: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide fall migrant.

Black Tern: One at CBL 1 Oct (MW) was rather late; last dates are 4-6 Oct.

Common Tern: Two at PL 13 Oct (MW) were rather late; last dates are 14-17 Oct.

Forster's Tern: By far a record fall count was the estimated 400 at BOL 10 Aug (MW); a count there the same day yielded 369 (LE).

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: This species now occurs statewide, with fewer eastward and lowest numbers in the central and northern Sandhills.

White-winged Dove: Reports continued apace, although all were westerly: 1-2 in Ogallala 21-31 Aug (m. ob.), one in Gering 16 Sep (AK), and 1-2 rather late in Gering 25-26 Nov (RSg). The Gering report was only the 14th record during 11 Oct-19 Mar for this cold-sensitive species.

Mourning Dove: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident and locally abundant fall migrant.

Yellow-bellied Cuckoo: Last reported were singles in Lancaster Co 29 Sep (SSc) and Dodge Co 27 Sep (JGJ). Most leave before Oct, although stragglers are not unexpected, with late dates extending to 30 Oct-5 Nov.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Only one was reported, a single at FF rather late 1 Oct (RS); last dates are 9-10 Oct.

Barn Owl: Single owls were found at each of two sites along the Sutherland Canal, Keith Co, 9 Aug (WF) where they were reported during Jul (SMa). Five apparent ads, possibly a grown family group, were in southwest Thomas Co

7 Aug (WF), and 4 juvs were located in a soffit hole in a Spalding house rather late on 15 Sep (AM fide JGJ). Timing of this species' nesting can be erratic (WM), but amazing were 3 groups of young owls taken from grain bins to FF Raptor Recovery at very late dates: 15 Oct and 31 Oct in Keith Co, and 6 Nov in Buffalo Co (fide CNK). These appear to be the latest dates for nestlings on record. Four further reports were of singles in Gotte Park, Kimball, 23 Aug (WRS), Gosper Co 20 Sep (LE), Keith Co 21 Sep (SJD), and very late in Hall Co 18 Nov (AF).

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Snowy Owl: The only report was of one taken to FF Raptor Recovery from Butler Co 12 Nov (fide CNK); this date ties the 6th-earliest date for this species.

Burrowing Owl: Possibly the farthest east breeding site south of the Platte River for this species, Prairie Dog WMA, Kearney Co, hosted a single 20 Sep (WF, KD). Best count was 9 at CLNWR 20 Aug (LRo); high fall counts are 11-22.

Barred Owl: This species is moving westward both in the south and north. One was at a known site in Jefferson Co 6 Sep (LDW), and another, possibly the farthest northwestern record, was at a ranch 10 miles southwest of O'Neill 5 Sep (CWi). There is a record from Grove Lake SRA, some 5 miles east of the latter sighting.

Long-eared Owl: None were reported of this uncommon statewide winter and rare statewide summer resident.

Short-eared Owl: None were reported of this uncommon statewide winter and rare statewide summer resident.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Near the site where successful nesting occurred this summer at Wildcat Hills SRA, Scotts Bluff Co, one was netted and banded at 11:10 pm 3 Oct; it made barking noises in response to playback (JL, HG). This was likely one of a breeding group, as the capture date is 2-3 weeks earlier than the usual fall arrival dates for migrants. A resident of the cedar canyons of southwestern Lincoln Co, Linda Deeds, has heard Saw-whets near her home since 1978, but one calling 9 Oct was the earliest to date.

Common Nighthawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Common Poorwill: Reports were routine of this common western summer resident and fall migrant.

Chuck-will's-widow: None of this uncommon southeastern summer resident were reported. There are few records after Jun, last 9-18 Aug.

Eastern Whip-poor-will: The only report was of one in the Lincoln Co cedar canyons 8 Sep that called 55 consecutive times (LDe); this is the westernmost fall record for the state. It is possible this was a Mexican Whip-poor-will; there is a single Nebraska report by an experienced observer of the latter species, in Sioux Co in June 2003. Mexican Whip-poor-will has been reported north to Montana and Saskatchewan.

Chimney Swift: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine for this locally fairly common western summer resident.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Westerly were singles in Lincoln Co 30 Aug (TJW) and Brown Co 22 Aug (RSt); both were likely migrants, although nesting has occurred rarely at both locations.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: The only records were of a single in Scotts Bluff Co 9-10 Aug (KD) and another near LM 17 Aug (J&GB).

Rufous Hummingbird: Six were reported, a typical fall showing, 6-21 Aug (JWh, KD, MS fide JGJ), easternmost in Gordon 21 Aug (TS).

Calliope Hummingbird: The only reports were of singles in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 3 and 13 Aug (KD), a well-known location.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Lewis's Woodpecker: Surprisingly, there were reports from 3 locations: 5, a probable family group, were at a regular site below Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 23 Aug (B&DW), one was in Bushnell Cem 16 Sep (L&BP), and one was in one of the few trees in Grant Co 17 Sep (GL). The few fall migrants that have been reported in Nebraska have generally occurred in Aug.

Red-headed Woodpecker: A few winter most years in the southeast, but the 28 at ICSP 12 Nov (SQ, LF) was a good count for the date.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Panhandle records are increasing; there were 6 reports from 4 locations: singles in Scotts Bluff Co 3 Aug and 15 Nov (KD), Morrill Co 7 Oct (TJW) and 20 Oct (WF), Garden Co 20 Oct (WF), and Dawes Co 30 Sep (JL). Sightings at the Scotts Bluff and Morrill Cos sites are of small established populations, but the Dawes and Garden Cos sightings are among fewer than 10 reports for those counties.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Westerly reports continue, especially in fall; reports were of singles in Kimball Co 22 Sep (LE) and in Sioux Co 23 Sep (LE), and of 2 juvs in Chase Co 25 Oct (JGJ). This species probably outnumbers Red-naped Sapsucker in fall in the Panhandle.

Red-naped Sapsucker: None were reported of this rare but annual Panhandle fall migrant.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: The long-staying Rocky Mountain subspecies fem was in the DeLara yard 15 Nov (KD).

American Three-Toed Woodpecker: An exciting discovery was of a male and fem, not necessarily a pair, in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co. A male was found by Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory surveyors 4 Jun, and likely the same male was found nearby 13 Sep (JB, ND) and photographed 22 Sep (SJD). A fem was found and photographed about 0.2 mile farther east on 18-19 Oct (MB, EBr, BFH) and on 24-25 Oct (JGJ, MP, video). These are the 3rd and 4th records of this species in the state (assuming a single bird of each gender); there is a male specimen taken 16 Jun 1916 in Scotts Bluff Co, and an apparent pair was in Smiley Canyon, Sioux Co, 18 Jul 1994.

This female American Three-toed Woodpecker, Nebraska's 4th record of this species, was found in East Ash Canyon, Dawes County, Nebraska 18-19 Oct 2014 by Ed M. Brogie, here photographed 19 Oct.

This male American Three-toed Woodpecker, Nebraska's 3rd record of this species, was photographed in West Ash Canyon, Dawes County, Nebraska 22 Sep 2014 by Stephen J. Dinsmore.

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Pileated Woodpecker: There have been several sightings of single birds at Flathead WMA, Jefferson Co, but the first involving 2 birds was 13 Sep (JGJ). Additional sightings there were of singles 19 Sep (LE) and 5 Oct (JC, SSc).

American Kestrel: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident and common statewide migrant.

Merlin: First arrivals in late Aug are usually of the prairie breeder *Falco columbarius richardsonii*, but a fem *F. c. columbarius*, the long-range migrant, was earliest on record for that subspecies in Buffalo Co 24 Aug (LR, RH). Early dates for *F. c. columbarius* are 12-13 Sep.

Peregrine Falcon: The presence of an immature resembling the west coast subspecies *Falco peregrinus pealei* in Dakota Co 15 Aug was thought by the observer to result from the various restocking efforts in eastern North America (BFH). One in Kearney Co 28 Oct (LB) was rather late, as was another really late in Scotts Bluff Co 26 Nov (AK, details); late dates for migrants are 6-7 Nov, but there are a few later Nov records.

Prairie Falcon: Easterly were singles in Phelps Co 16 Nov (AF) and Merrick Co 17 Nov (JGJ).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: There were about 30 reports, noticeably more than usual, statewide 8 Aug-28 Sep (L&BP, GR, m. ob.); both dates push the envelope, as early dates are 4-6 Aug and late dates 4-6 Oct.

Western Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine of this common western summer resident and migrant.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Tardy were ads feeding fledged young at PRSP 13 Sep (L&BP, CNK), possibly a late date for dependent fledglings.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: There were 3 reports, all by experienced observers; two were at Pioneers Park, Lincoln, 12 Sep (NA), and singles were in Saline Co 13 Sep (JGJ) and PRSP the same day (CNK, L&BP).

Acadian Flycatcher: The only report was of a molting ad in Saunders Co 10 Aug (SMa, details); this may have been a failed breeder, although little is known about fall movements of this rare southeastern Nebraska breeder.

Alder Flycatcher: None were reported of this rare, less-than-annual eastern fall migrant.

Willow Flycatcher: A late bird was in WP 17-18 Sep (MW); last dates are 17-19 Sep. Most fall migrants are reported from the east, and so unexpected in the far west were two singles at separate Kimball Co locations 6 Sep (MW).

Least Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Hammond's Flycatcher: The only report was of one in Kimball Co 5 Sep (MW, photo). This is a regular low-density fall migrant in the Panhandle.

Dusky Flycatcher: Singles were banded at WHNC 3 Sep (HG, LDz) and CSP 10 Sep (JL, photo). This is a regular fall migrant through the Panhandle, likely more common than the 35 or so records to date would indicate.

This Dusky Flycatcher was banded and photographed at Chadron State Park, Dawes County, Nebraska 10 Sep 2014 by Josh Lefever of the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: There were 3 reports of this Panhandle migrant, rarely-reported in fall as it likely heads to the Rocky Mountains after breeding. One was banded at CSP 30 Aug and recaptured there 5 Sep (JL, KD), 2 were in Gotte Park, Kimball Co, 6 Sep (MW), and one was rather late in southern Scotts Bluff Co 13 Sep (KD, RSg). Of 30 fall records, 28 are in the period 18 Aug-17 Sep.

Eastern Phoebe: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Say's Phoebe: None were reported east of Phelps Co, where one was found 31 Aug (LR, RH), and Kearney Co, where one was found 14 Sep (WF). These are only the 13th and 14th fall records east of Lincoln Co apart from known summering birds.

Great Crested Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide, uncommon west, summer resident and fall migrant.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common Panhandle summer resident and common fall migrant.

Western Kingbird: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Eastern Kingbird: One at PL 6 Oct (LE) was 6th-latest on record, and another in Omaha 2 Oct (BWe) was tardy. Last dates are 2-3 Oct, with only 6 later dates (including this fall's 6 Oct date).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: None were reported; the only summer report was of a pair nesting near Hebron.

Loggerhead Shrike: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident.

Northern Shrike: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor and fall migrant.

Bell's Vireo: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Yellow-throated Vireo: One in WP 29 Sep (SSc), likely the same bird which was there 25 Sep (LE), was rather late; last dates are 29 Sep-4 Oct.

Plumbeous Vireo: Two banded at WHNC 17 Sep (JL, HG) were rather late; last dates are 17-21 Sep.

Cassin's Vireo: Identifying this species can be tricky, even for banders. Two birds whose photos hinted at something other than Cassin's were shown by measurements to be indeed Cassin's (JL, HG). The 6 reported were in the Panhandle 24 Aug-23 Sep (WRS, JL, HG, LE). The last reported, 23 Sep in Sioux Co (LE), was 3rd-latest on record by 5 days.

Blue-headed Vireo: This species is less than annual in central and western Nebraska; singles were in Buffalo Co 1 Sep (KS) and Phelps Co 16 Sep (WF).

Warbling Vireo: Previous high fall count for this species was 14, and so two major concentrations, 67 in Schuyler 7 Sep (JGJ) and 50 in Dakota Co 6 Sep (BFH), both involving mixed flocks with Red-eyed Vireos, were unexpected. The only Panhandle report was of the expected western subspecies *Vireo gilvus swainsonii* (= *brewsteri*); one was banded at WHNC 3 Sep (JL). The eastern subspecies *V. g. gilvus* occurs west almost to the Panhandle, at least in fall migration; one was at LO 21 and 31 Aug (JV, m. ob.), and another was in Custer Co 23 Aug (TH). Singles in Lincoln Co 15 and 17 Sep (TJW) were rather late that far west; last Panhandle dates are 13-16 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: Good numbers continue to be reported for this species; there were about 15 reported 26 Aug-28 Sep (m. ob.), along with a record late bird in Lancaster Co 27 Oct (RSt). Previous latest date was 14 Oct.

Red-eyed Vireo: As with Warbling Vireo, record counts were set by the 50 in Dakota Co 6 Sep (BFH) and 29 at Schuyler 7 Sep (JGJ). These were in mixed flocks with Warbling Vireos.

Pinyon Jay: As many as 80 were using the feeders at the Hoffman residence in Morrill Co 1 Nov (KD); there appear to have been two flocks, one of about 25 present for some time, and a newer flock of around 40 (CH) that may have merged recently to form a larger flock. The only other report was of one along Wright's Gap Road, Scotts Bluff Co, 19 Aug (BR); this species is hard to find in summer.

Blue Jay: Fall migrants can be conspicuous and often in good numbers; best counts were 45 in Lancaster Co 27 Sep (MW) and 34 in Cass Co 2 Sep (KSc). Most migrants pass through Sep-Oct.

Black-billed Magpie: This species is of some concern in Nebraska, as local, isolated populations are tending to disappear, especially in central and eastern

Nebraska. Reports of 8 near Ogallala 17 Sep (L&BP) and 1-2 at various Scotts Bluff Co locations during the period (m. ob.) were from areas where the species seems to be hanging on. Elsewhere, occurrence is spotty. Encouraging was the persistence of a small group of 6-9 in Snell Canyon, Lincoln Co, during the period (TJW) and the reappearance of 5 after a 5-6 year absence in western Madison Co 8 Sep (JMa). Sightings from tenuous easterly locations were of 3 in Keya Paha Co 8 Oct (WF) and 3 in southwestern Franklin Co 16 Nov (LR, RH).

American Crow: The 1000 in Knox Co 1 Nov were considered an indication of a "return to previous numbers" (MB). High fall counts are 2000-3000.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and abundant migrant.

Purple Martin: Two at Calamus Res, Garfield Co, 18 Aug (LRo) were in an area of the state (Loup drainage) where reports are infrequent. Peak count at the Omaha roost was 50,000, on 24 Aug (JR).

Tree Swallow: Reports in the northwest are still noteworthy: it is well-established at Valentine NWR, where 14 were found 19 Aug (LRo) and 50 on 29 Aug (AB). CLNWR hosted 100 on 3 Aug (DD) and 3 on 31 Aug (JV et al.). Two were in Scotts Bluff Co 21 Aug (LRo).

Violet-Green Swallow: Reports were routine for this uncommon Panhandle summer resident and rare migrant.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Five at FF 11 Oct (L&BP) were rather late; last dates are 17-19 Oct in the east.

Bank Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Cliff Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and abundant migrant.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and abundant migrant.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident and irregular migrant.

Mountain Chickadee: The only report was of one at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder 29 Oct-13 Nov (AD); this species is an irregular winter visitor to the Panhandle, with most records from Scotts Bluff Co.

Tufted Titmouse: This species thins out rapidly westward in the south; one was in Gage Co 13 Aug (RT), and reporters in Lancaster Co consider occurrences noteworthy there, such as one at Holmes L, the only one for the period, 6 Nov (LE), and 2 at a Lincoln feeder 15 Nov (MUs).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: One in a Dixon Co yard 25 Aug was "earliest by a month" there (JJ), but one was at an Omaha feeder 23 Aug (RM). Numbers were normal statewide, although 8-10 at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder 29 Oct (AD) were suggestive of a local influx.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports were routine for this common eastern, central, and northwestern resident and statewide winter visitor.

Pygmy Nuthatch: This species is very rare away from its breeding locations; only the 8th such record was one at Bushnell Cem 25 Aug (MW). Strangely, of these 8 records, 4 are from Lancaster Co.

Brown Creeper: One in Omaha 5 Oct (JR) was rather early; early dates are 20-22 Sep. Counts of 6 in Platte Co 29 Nov (TJW) and Lancaster Co 10 Nov (BRo) were good counts for this solitary species; high counts are 7-12.

Rock Wren: Easterly was one in Phelps Co 20 Sep (KD, MW); there are fewer than 20 records of fall wanderers south and east of the breeding range.

Canyon Wren: Most unexpected was one in Gotte Park, Kimball Co, 31 Aug (KDy); if accepted by the NOU Records Committee it would be Nebraska's 4th documented record.

House Wren: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident.

Winter Wren: One in Dawes Co 9 Sep was carefully identified as this species by an observer familiar with the calls of Pacific Wren in the Pacific Northwest (MW); Winter Wren is less than annual in occurrence in the west.

Sedge Wren: Two in Lancaster Co 24 Oct (SSc) were rather late; last dates are 26-30 Oct.

Marsh Wren: Singles in Lancaster Co 12 Sep (NA) and Sarpy Co the same day (L&BP) were not at breeding areas and likely fall migrants; fall arrival away from breeding areas is in early to mid-Sep, but there are few data.

Carolina Wren: One in Holt Co 5 Sep (CWi) is one of few northern records, likely a fall disperser; this species has difficulty surviving winters that far north and west.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: There were 3 rather late sightings: singles at CSP 28 Sep (JL, HG) and Oliver Res 26 Sep (TF), and 2 at WHNC 24 Sep (AV). Latest dates are 27-29 Sep.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Rather early was one in Box Butte Co 1 Oct (JGJ); early dates are 21-24 Sep.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: One at WP 5 Sep (LE) was early; early dates in the south and east are 2-5 Sep.

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and migrant, less common Panhandle.

Mountain Bluebird: First arrivals at the cedar canyons wintering area in southwestern Lincoln Co were 4 on 24 Oct (J&JH); earliest such dates are 2-4 Oct.

Townsend's Solitaire: Arrival in the west is at least a month before small numbers drift to the east; one was at Oliver Res 6 Sep (MW), and one was in Lancaster Co rather early for the east on 25 Oct (EB).

Veery: None were reported of this rare eastern and western fall migrant; casual central.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Only one of this less-than-annual fall migrant was found, in Sarpy Co rather late on 10 Oct (CNK, details). Of the 35 fall records in all, late dates are 14-20 Oct.

Swainson's Thrush: One at LO 31 Aug (MG, JD, DK, JT) and another at PRSP 1 Sep (SSc) were rather early; early dates are 24-25 Oct. The 10 near Chadron 12 Sep (JL) was 3rd-highest fall count on record; higher are 13 and 24.

Hermit Thrush: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide fall migrant.

Wood Thrush: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern summer resident and uncommon fall migrant.

American Robin: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and abundant migrant.

Gray Catbird: Three in Dawes Co 29 Sep (JL) were rather late for the west; last dates there are 29 Sep-1 Oct.

Northern Mockingbird: One appeared near North Platte 9 Nov in the same place one wintered last year; very likely they are the same bird (TJW).

Sage Thrasher: An excellent showing of at least 24 birds occurred in the Panhandle 10 Aug-22 Sep (m. ob.); best counts were 10 in Kimball Co 22 Aug (JGJ) and 7+ in Cheyenne Co 10 Aug (WF). As one observer noted, it "seems to be more common in panhandle than data may indicate" (MW).

Brown Thrasher: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

European Starling: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and abundant fall migrant.

American Pipit: One in Phelps Co 6 Nov (AF) was tardy; last dates are in mid-Nov.

Sprague's Pipit: Discovery of one at the prairie dog colony at Prairie Dog WPA, Kearney Co, 14 Sep (WF), rather early, provided a good study for NOU members 20-22 Sep, when up to 9 were reported (m. ob.). The other reliable site in the state is Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co, where up to 7 were present 25 Sep-11 Oct (EA, MW, SMa). Fall migration early-late dates are 14 Sep-30 Oct.

Bohemian Waxwing: The only report was of one photographed in a rural Lincoln Co yard 20 Nov (VC). Early dates for this erratic winter visitor are 6-7 Nov.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this common eastern, rare western summer resident and common statewide winter visitor.

Lapland Longspur: Best count was the estimate of "thousands" in Polk Co 17 Nov (JGJ), implying the presence of at least 2000; high count, apart from several referring to "thousands", is 9000.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: The only reports were of 17 in Kimball Co 23 Sep (SJD), where expected, and 6 in Phelps Co 20 Sep (NA); the latter report coincides with peak fall migration, but is somewhat easterly.

Smith's Longspur: The only reports were of 2 at Jack Sinn 6 Oct (CNK) and one at SCP 11 Oct (SMa). Fall migration early-late dates are 18 Sep-20 Dec.

McCown's Longspur: The only report was of an excellent count of 237 in Kimball Co 23 Sep (SJD); the only higher fall tally on record is 1230 in the same county.

Snow Bunting: In many years, this species does not arrive in time to make the fall report, but this year there were 7 such reports, beginning with 2 rather early near Niobrara 1 Nov (MB); early dates are 26-27 Oct.

Ovenbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common northern and eastern summer resident and fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Louisiana Waterthrush: The study of birds nesting along Stone Creek in PRSP (JC, SSc) provided some interesting dates. On 3 Aug there were 4 territories with ads and juvs, on 1 Sep juvs were noted in different territories with no ads present, and on 13 Sep one juv with a drooping wing remained. The 13 Sept observation is the 2nd-latest date on record.

Northern Waterthrush: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant. Less common west.

Black-and-white Warbler: Reports were routine of this uncommon northern summer resident and fairly common statewide fall migrant.

Prothonotary Warbler: After summering at FF, last reported were 2 there 17 Aug (JCr); last dates are 1-4 Sep.

Tennessee Warbler: The 14th and 15th Panhandle records, all 2 Sep-11 Oct, were of singles in Scotts Bluff Co 2 Sep (RSg) and 2 Oct (JL; banded, photo).

This Tennessee Warbler, the 15th Nebraska Panhandle record, was banded and photographed at Chadron State Park, Dawes Co, 2 Oct 2014 by Josh Lefever of the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

Orange-crowned Warbler: One in Scotts Bluff Co 23 Aug (JGJ) was early; early dates are 23-24 Aug. In the Panhandle the Rocky Mountain subspecies *Oreothlypis celata orestera* tends to be an earlier migrant than statewide *O. c. celata*. An amazing total of 56 were banded at CSP in 4 days 28 Sep-2 Oct (JL). There were several rather late dates; singles were in Saline Co 9 Nov (JGJ) and Dodge Co 10 Nov (KSh). Last dates are 6-8 Nov, but there are a surprising 8 later records, including 7 in Dec.

Nashville Warbler: Best count was the 40 at Wilderness Park, Lincoln, 14 Sep (MW); highs are 50-60.

Connecticut Warbler: None of this rare eastern fall migrant were reported.

MacGillivray's Warbler: None of this rare western fall migrant were reported.

Mourning Warbler: Generally an eastern migrant in fall, one was westerly in Phelps Co 21 Sep (BWe).

Kentucky Warbler: None were reported of this locally fairly common eastern summer resident; this species is silent and hard to find after Jul. Last dates are in mid-Sep.

Common Yellowthroat: The 35 at Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co, 27 Sep (TJW) was the 2nd highest fall tally on record; high is 45.

American Redstart: Reports were routine for this common northern and eastern summer resident and statewide fall migrant, less common west.

Northern Parula: One in Dawson Co 30 Sep (JGJ) was westerly, one of only 11 records away from the east. Rather late were singles at FF 2 Oct (JCr) and 4 Oct in Lancaster Co (MW). There is only one later fall date, 9 Oct.

Magnolia Warbler: One in Otoe Co 20 Oct (SQ) was rather late; last dates are surprisingly late: 22-24 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern fall migrant.

This after-hatch-year female Blackpoll Warbler, 10th for the Nebraska Panhandle, was banded and photographed by Josh Lefever of the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory at Chadron State Park, Dawes Co, 18 Sep 2014.

Blackburnian Warbler: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern fall migrant.

Yellow Warbler: Reports were routine for this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: A first winter fem in Omaha 23 Aug (JR) was rather early; early dates are 18-21 Aug.

Blackpoll Warbler: This species is a less than annual statewide fall migrant with, surprisingly, as many records in the Panhandle as in the east. The only report this fall was of an after-hatch-year fem banded and photographed at CSP 18 Sep (JL, LDz); this is the 10th fall Panhandle record.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: None were reported of this rare statewide fall migrant.

Palm Warbler: This is a less than annual fall migrant, with only about 50 fall records in all, and so the 3 reports were unexpected: singles were in Dixon Co 18 Sep (JJ), Omaha 1 Oct (RS), and Lancaster Co 20 Oct (LE). The latter was rather late; there are only 5 later dates.

Pine Warbler: Also less than annual, there was only one report of this species, a bright ad male at LM 21 Sep (SJD, details). There are about 50 fall records in all, evenly divided between the Panhandle and the rest of the state.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: Latest on record by 3 days, and only the 2nd fall record for the east, was a yellow-throated individual in Wayne Co 3 Nov (WF, details).

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: One at FF 21 Aug (AP) was record early by 4 days, while rather late for the west were 2 at LM 29 Nov (WK, GM).

Yellow-throated Warbler: None were reported; like Kentucky Warbler, this species is silent and hard to find after breeding. Last dates are in mid-Sep.

Townsend's Warbler: One in Lincoln Co 29 Sep (TJW) was easterly and rather late; last dates are 29 Sep, Oct 2, 3. Easternmost reports on record in fall are from Lincoln, Grant, and Perkins Cos.

Black-throated Green Warbler: One in Douglas Co 19 Oct (SMa) was rather late; late dates are 22-26 Oct.

Canada Warbler: One at PSP 12 Aug (DT) was rather early; early dates are 10-14 Aug.

Wilson's Warbler: One in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 4 Aug (RSg) was very early; early dates are 11-13 Aug, but there are 5 earlier dates starting 29 Jul.

Yellow-breasted Chat: There were two easterly reports, possibly indicating a recovery in the eastern population, which has been essentially non-existent for several years: singles were in Dixon Co ("first for several years") 14 Sep (JJ), and Saunders Co 6 Oct (CNK). The latter was rather late; last dates are 4-6 Oct. These are only the 3rd and 4th fall records in the east in 35 years.

Green-tailed Towhee: The only report of this rare, less-than-annual, fall Panhandle migrant was of 2 at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 23 Sep (SJD).

Spotted Towhee: First report southeast of the breeding range for fall, likely a migrant, was early 12 Sep in Lancaster Co (LE); early dates for migrants in southeast Nebraska are 15-18 Sep.

Eastern Towhee: Fall migrants are reported in declining numbers as far west as central Nebraska; one at LO 31 Aug (JT) was thus unexpected. Another was less surprising in Buffalo Co 16 Oct (RC).

Cassin's Sparrow: None were reported; this species departs by mid-Aug and is difficult to identify away from breeding areas.

American Tree Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant and winter visitor.

Chipping Sparrow: Last dates are 13-14 Nov, and so two reports of tardy birds were noteworthy: one was with juncos in Merrick Co 17 Nov (JGJ) and another was at a Dodge Co feeder 14-22 Nov (GR). These are the 8th and 9th documented reports between mid-Nov and mid-Mar; there is only one documented record of overwintering. The 200 in PP 8 Sep (MW) was 3rd-highest fall count on record.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Brewer's Sparrow: Three in Sheridan Co 29 Aug (RDe) were easterly; most reports in summer and migration are from the western Panhandle.

Field Sparrow: There are fewer than 20 fall records from the Panhandle, and so two this fall were of interest. One was banded and photographed at CSP 18 Sep (JL); it was of the bland-faced western subspecies *Spizella pusilla arenacea*. The other was banded at WHNC 3 Oct (HG, JL).

Vesper Sparrow: Amazing numbers can be found in the west during fall migration; 2117 were in Kimball Co 23 Sep (SJD), a record fall count, technically ahead of the previous high of "thousands". But who else tries to count, let alone identify, the huge numbers of grassland sparrows passing through the Panhandle in fall?

Lark Sparrow: The 80 in Sioux Co 21 Aug (LRo) was 2nd-highest fall count on record after the high of 86.

Black-throated Sparrow: NE's 6th record, first in summer, was of a "one-day wonder" at a feeder in rural Lincoln Co 26 Aug (VC, photo).

This Black-throated Sparrow, Nebraska's 6th, was at the rural Lincoln Co feeder of Virginia Clark for one day only, and photographed by her 26 Aug 2014.

Lark Bunting: Somewhat easterly for the south were a fem in Phelps Co 31 Aug (LR, RH) and 4 birds at Prairie Dog WPA, Kearney Co, 3-4 Sep (WF).

Savannah Sparrow: Reports were routine of this locally fairly common western summer resident and common statewide fall migrant.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One was rather late in Douglas Co 19 Oct (RS) and another was in an Omaha greenhouse 19 Oct (JR). Last dates are 18-19 Oct.

Henslow's Sparrow: One at SCP 25 Oct (EB) was 2nd-latest on record by 4 days; last dates are 23-25 Oct.

Le Conte's Sparrow: Reports were routine for this locally common eastern fall migrant.

Nelson's Sparrow: Singles were rather late in Wayne Co 24 Oct (JJ), in Lancaster Co 24 Oct (JC, SSc), and at SCP 25 Oct (EB). Last dates are 24-25 Oct.

Fox Sparrow: Two at a feeder in Kearney Co 15 Nov (LR, RH) were westerly.

Song Sparrow: Reports were routine of this fairly common mostly eastern summer resident and common statewide fall migrant, less common westward.

Lincoln's Sparrow: The 34 in a Dixon Co yard 5 Oct (JJ) was a good count; highs are 50-100.

Swamp Sparrow: Generally considered an uncommon migrant in the west, there were an encouraging 6 banded at CSP 28 Sep-1 Oct (JL, HG).

White-throated Sparrow: The 55 at Neale Woods, Krimlofski Tract, Washington Co, 25 Oct (JR) was 2nd-highest for fall; high is 100. Earliest arrival noted was banded at CSP 22 Sep, a tan-striped individual (JL). There is some evidence that tan-striped birds arrive earlier in Nebraska on average than white-striped birds.

Harris's Sparrow: The only reports from the west, where rare, were of singles 18 and 19 Oct in Dawes Co (MB) and another in Scotts Bluff Co 25 Oct (RSg).

White-crowned Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported of this fairly common Panhandle summer resident and uncommon fall migrant.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: As observers become more aware of the various and often-puzzling junco forms, "Cassiar" Junco (*Junco hyemalis cismontanus*) is reported more often. It appears to be an uncommon statewide winter visitor. Reports were of 2 in Scotts Bluff Co 19 Oct and 11 Nov (KD), 2 in Omaha 1 Nov (SMa), and at least one in Lincoln Co 19 Nov (TJW).

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: An ad male in Cedar Co 30 Jul-1 Aug (DT) provided an unexpected mid-summer record; it seems that a female reported there for several weeks through 30 Jul may actually have been an imm male that acquired ad plumage in late Jul. The 200 in a flock in Omaha 4 Nov (RS) was an excellent fall tally; highs are 204-250.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: Rare in the east, a "pale adult male" was in Omaha 27 Nov (SMa), the only eastern report.

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: Reports were routine of this fairly common western, rare central, fall migrant and winter visitor.

Summer Tanager: A rather late breeding record involved ads feeding fledged young at PRSP 1 Sep (JC, SSc); this is the 3rd consecutive year this has been

observed there within a day or two of 1 Sep (JC, SSc). Rare away from the east, one was in Buffalo Co 1 Sep (KS), only the second such record for fall. One at FF 8 Oct (JCr) was rather late; usual last dates are 26-28 Sep, but there are (now) only 5 dates after 2 Oct.

Scarlet Tanager: Possibly the latest breeding record for the state was of a begging fledgling at PRSP 7 Sep (JC, SSc). One at FF 8 Oct (JCr) was rather late; last dates are 10-11 Oct.

Western Tanager: There are many records of this species straying eastward in late fall, as far as the Atlantic Coast. A bird with "pale wing bars apparent against gray wings" was seen in Omaha 1 Oct (JR), a rather late date suggestive of an easterly Western Tanager; juv Summer Tanagers can exhibit wing bars as well. There are two previous fall records of Western Tanager in eastern Nebraska.

Northern Cardinal: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident, rare west.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: An ad male was rather late in a Dixon Co yard 5 Oct (JJ); last dates are 7-11 Oct.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Reports were routine for this fairly common western and central summer resident and fall migrant.

Blue Grosbeak: A fem in a Dixon Co yard 6 Oct (JJ) was rather late; there are only 5 later dates.

Lazuli Bunting: One was rather late at WHNC 23 Sep (LDz); last dates are 21-23 Sep, but there are 8 later dates. A "possible" was one with wing-bars in Lancaster Co 4 Oct (NA); juv Indigo Buntings can show a wing-bar effect. There are 8 fall records of Lazuli Bunting away from the Panhandle.

Indigo Bunting: Late dates (12-13 Oct) are mostly from the Missouri River Valley, thus unexpected was a fem/imm in Antelope Co 6 Oct (WF); also tardy away from the Missouri was a fem in Furnas Co 20-21 Sep (RH, BWe). Last dates away from the Missouri are 18-21 Sep.

Dickcissel: After a few good showings in recent years in the Panhandle, none were reported there in summer 2013 or 2014. However, there were 2 fall reports this year, likely of migrants: 3 were in Scotts Bluff Co 16 Aug (KD), and, very strangely, 2 males popped out of some scrub at CSP 24 Aug accompanied by typical western denizens of western scrub (JGJ). One in Phelps Co 22 Oct (AF) was tardy; last dates are 27-30 Oct.

Bobolink: Two at SCP 20 Sep (MW) were rather late; last dates are 26-27 Sep. Molt occurs in Aug, prior to southward migration; "many" juvs and fall ads were in Phelps Co 31 Aug (LR, RH).

Red-winged Blackbird: A count of 45,027 in Lincoln Co 27 Oct (TJW) was impressive; high count before Dec is 100,000.

Eastern Meadowlark: One singing in Cass Co 21 Oct (CNK) was likely a consequence of the fall uptick in hormonal activity as birds prepare to undertake fall movements.

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Rusty Blackbird: Rare in the Panhandle, with fewer than 20 fall reports, a video recording of one was made in Scotts Bluff Co 25 Oct (KD). Another was westerly in Lincoln Co 15 Nov (LDe). There were numerous reports, most, as expected, from the east in Nov, involving a total of some 220 individuals (m. ob.).

Brewer's Blackbird: Large flocks form early in fall, such as the 600 in Sioux Co 28 Aug (RDe), but high counts are 1000-3000. Migrants occur statewide, less common eastward; 60 were in Pawnee Co 13 Nov (JGJ).

Common Grackle: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Great-tailed Grackle: The 300 in Hall Co 9 Nov (MH) tied the fall high count.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and abundant fall migrant.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and fall migrant.

Bullock's Oriole: This species leaves early in fall, the males often leaving as early as Jul for a molt migration. There were no reports of this species after Aug this fall.

Baltimore Oriole: One at WP 25 Sep (LE) was rather late; last dates are 1-4 Oct.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported of this locally common western Panhandle winter visitor. Usual arrival is in early Nov.

House Finch: Reports were routine for this fairly common statewide summer resident, common fall migrant, and winter visitor.

Purple Finch: A rare westerly record was of 8 in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co, 19 Oct (MB). There were several reports from the east, but numbers were low; overall total was around 35.

Cassin's Finch: Individuals were banded at WHNC 30 Aug (LDz) and 5 Sep (HG); this is a rare, generally annual, but erratic winter visitor to the Panhandle.

Red Crossbill: Surprisingly, there were only 3 reports away from Scotts Bluff, Sioux, and Dawes Cos: 3 were at Bushnell Cem 24 Aug (WRS), a male was at a Dodge Co feeder 7-8 Nov (D&JP), and one was in Lancaster Co 13 Nov (MW).

Pine Siskin: Oddly, none were reported until Sep. This species has been essentially absent from the Panhandle pinewoods for a while; "I haven't seen a Siskin around here for months, not even in the Wildcat Hills" (KD, 17 Sep) and "I saw one banded yesterday at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center. It was the first one banded since 2012. Just a few years ago it was the most numerous bird banded at the station." (AK, 18 Sep). However, beginning 1 Sep, when 2 were at CSP (JL), there were several reports from the Panhandle pinewoods, but best count was only 20, at CSP 22 Sep (JL). A few appeared in the east; up to 8 were in a Dixon Co yard 17 Sep-14 Nov (JJ), 2 were in Douglas Co 22 Oct (JR), and 1-6 were at 4 different Sarpy and Douglas Co locations 8-29 Nov (ARy, JR, L&BP, EB).

Lesser Goldfinch: This species continues to consolidate its Nebraska range, mostly in Scotts Bluff Co, where up to 6 were at WHNC through 22 Sep (JL, LE, m. ob.). Evidence for breeding accumulates; 2 males and a non-flight-capable fledgling were in Carter Canyon, Sioux Co, 23 Aug (JGJ).

American Goldfinch: The 265 in Dawes Co 9 Sep (MW) was 2nd-highest count on record, after 300.

Evening Grosbeak: Strangely, this erratic winter visitor appeared only in 2 Lincoln Co yards: the Virginia Clark yard 1 Nov (fem; VC, photo) and the Linda Deeds yard 11 Nov (male; LDe).

House Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Holdrege Fall Field Days

by Janis Paseka

The 2014 NOU Fall Field Days took place in Holdrege at the Super 8 Motel on Sept. 19-21. There were about 35 in attendance at the meeting, which was organized by Dave Heidt and Betty Grenon.

On Friday evening Dave Heidt led a humor-filled discussion on bird songs and calls and ways to remember them, as audience members suggested their own mnemonic devices. On Saturday evening, T. J. Walker gave a presentation on the Nebraska Game and Parks' program of habitat rehabilitation to benefit Ring-necked Pheasants and other species. Field trip destinations on Saturday and on Sunday morning included Harlan County Reservoir, Prairie Dog WPA and Funk Lagoon WPA. Trips were led by Bill Flack, Tim Hajda, Robin Harding, Lanny Randolph and Kent Skaggs.

The total species count was 138. Some of the weekend highlights were Black-bellied Plover, Red-necked Phalarope, Sabine's Gull, Common Tern, Sprague's Pipit and Le Conte's Sparrow.

NOU Fall Field Days - Holdrege

	Buffalo	Dawson	Franklin	Furnas	Gosper	Harlan	Kearney	Phelps
Canada Goose	x	x						
Wood Duck	x				x	x		x
American Wigeon					x			
Mallard	x	x			x			x
Blue-winged Teal		x			x	x		x
Northern Shoveler						x		x
Northern Pintail								x

NOU Fall Field Days - Holdrege

	Buffalo	Dawson	Franklin	Furnas	Gosper	Harlan	Kearney	Phelps
Green-winged Teal								x
Redhead					x			
Ring-necked Duck								x
Ruddy Duck					x			
Northern Bobwhite	x				x			
Ring-necked Pheasant					x		x	x
Wild Turkey		x		x				
Pied-billed Grebe	x		x		x	x		x
Eared Grebe					x			
Double-crested Cormorant					x	x		
American White Pelican	x				x	x		x
Great Blue Heron	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Great Egret					x	x		
Snowy Egret						x		
Cattle Egret							x	x
Green Heron	x							
Black-crowned Night-Heron						x		x
White-faced Ibis						x	x	x
Turkey Vulture	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Osprey						x		
Bald Eagle						x		
Northern Harrier						x	x	
Sharp-shinned Hawk					x	x	x	x
Cooper's Hawk	x				x	x		
Broad-winged Hawk		x						x
Swainson's Hawk		x						x
Red-tailed Hawk	x	x	x			x		x
Ferruginous Hawk								x
American Coot					x	x	x	x
Black-bellied Plover						x		
Semipalmated Plover						x		
Killdeer	x	x			x	x	x	x
American Avocet						x		

NOU Fall Field Days - Holdrege

	Buffalo	Dawson	Franklin	Furnas	Gosper	Harlan	Kearney	Phelps
Spotted Sandpiper						x		
Solitary Sandpiper	x							
Greater Yellowlegs	x					x		x
Lesser Yellowlegs						x		x
Marbled Godwit								x
Semipalmated Sandpiper						x		x
Least Sandpiper						x		x
Baird's Sandpiper						x		
Pectoral Sandpiper								x
Stilt Sandpiper								x
Wilson's Snipe							x	x
Red-necked Phalarope						x		
Sabine's Gull					x			
Franklin's Gull	x	x			x	x		
Ring-billed Gull		x			x	x		x
Herring Gull						x		
Black Tern					x	x		
Common Tern						x		
Forster's Tern						x		
Rock Pigeon	x	x			x		x	x
Eurasian Collared-Dove	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Mourning Dove	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Barn Owl								
Eastern Screech-Owl					x	x		
Great Horned Owl						x		
Burrowing Owl		x					x	x
Chimney Swift	x					x		
Belted Kingfisher	x	x			x			
Red-headed Woodpecker	x		x		x	x	x	x
Red-bellied Woodpecker	x				x	x		
Downy Woodpecker	x				x	x	x	x
Hairy Woodpecker	x				x			x
Northern Flicker	x		x		x	x	x	x

NOU Fall Field Days - Holdrege

	Buffalo	Dawson	Franklin	Furnas	Gosper	Harlan	Kearney	Phelps
American Kestrel		x		x		x		x
Olive-sided Flycatcher					x			
Eastern Phoebe					x	x		x
Great Crested Flycatcher						x		x
Western Kingbird					x			x
Eastern Kingbird	x							x
Bell's Vireo	x							x
Warbling Vireo	x							
Red-eyed Vireo	x							
Blue Jay	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Horned Lark							x	x
Northern Rough-winged Swallow						x		
Cliff Swallow						x		
Barn Swallow	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Black-capped Chickadee	x							
Red-breasted Nuthatch	x					x		
White-breasted Nuthatch	x			x		x		
Rock Wren								x
House Wren	x			x	x			
Marsh Wren	x					x		x
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	x							x
Eastern Bluebird	x					x		
Swainson's Thrush	x						x	
American Robin	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Gray Catbird	x			x				x
Brown Thrasher	x				x			
European Starling	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
American Pipit			x				x	x
Sprague's Pipit							x	x
Cedar Waxwing	x			x				
Orange-crowned Warbler	x		x	x				x
Nashville Warbler	x			x				
Common Yellowthroat	x							x

NOU Fall Field Days - Holdrege

	Buffalo	Dawson	Franklin	Furnas	Gosper	Harlan	Kearney	Phelps
Yellow Warbler						x		x
Yellow-rumped Warbler	x						x	x
Wilson's Warbler								x
Spotted Towhee	x			x				
Chipping Sparrow	x							x
Clay-colored Sparrow	x			x			x	x
Field Sparrow	x							
Vesper Sparrow					x		x	x
Lark Sparrow							x	
Savannah Sparrow					x	x	x	x
Grasshopper Sparrow						x	x	
Le Conte's Sparrow								x
Song Sparrow				x				x
Lincoln's Sparrow	x			x				x
White-crowned Sparrow				x				
Dark-eyed Junco				x				
Northern Cardinal	x		x	x				x
Blue Grosbeak	x							
Indigo Bunting				x				
Dickcissel								x
Bobolink								x
Red-winged Blackbird	x	x					x	x
Western Meadowlark		x			x		x	x
Yellow-headed Blackbird	x					x	x	x
Common Grackle	x							x
Brown-headed Cowbird	x						x	x
Orchard Oriole	x							x
Baltimore Oriole						x		
House Finch		x			x		x	
Pine Siskin						x		x
American Goldfinch	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
House Sparrow	x	x			x	x	x	x
Total species: 138	62	25	15	20	48	66	37	78

Summary of Raptor Banding Efforts at Hitchcock Nature Center Fall 2014

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The 2014 season was by far the most unusual and frustrating season since the inception of raptor banding and hawk watch at the Hitchcock Nature Center in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, just north of Crescent. Banding diurnal raptors commenced on September 7th on schedule. The month of September was typical as far as capture rates and weather systems, although we were stymied somewhat by the lack of availability of European Starlings for lure birds. House Sparrows proved a nearly adequate substitute.

During the peak period of October, weather systems that drive diurnal raptor migration worked against monitoring efforts by forcing migration on a broad front rather than concentrating migrants along the Loess Hills ridges where we monitor. As a result, diurnal raptor numbers were reduced by about 25% compared to average banding seasons. Species diversity of banded birds was perhaps the most disheartening aspect of the diurnal season. Only one American Kestrel was banded besides the typical three species that make up the bulk of our captures: Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Cooper's Hawk. The one bright spot was the ratio of juvenile to adult Redtails banded. After a nearly 50-50 ratio of juveniles to adults in 2013, in 2014 the ratio was more typical of a successful breeding season (Beckett and Proudfoot 2011; Whalen and Watts 2002). It approached an 80-20 ratio of juveniles to adults.

Northern Saw-whet Owl banding commenced October 10th and was strong from the onset, considering that the 2013 season was at the bottom of their population cycle. The weather systems that disrupted the diurnal banding operations were advantageous for nocturnal Saw-whet banding (http://www.hawkcount.org/). By the end of October, 23 previously unbanded Saw-whet owls were banded at Hitchcock, and three that had previously been banded were also captured. One came from Hawkridge at Duluth and had been banded only eight days before. If the owl had traveled in a straight line, it would have averaged 51.2 miles per night, a new record flight for our Saw-whet recaptures. The second recapture came from Roosevelt National Forest in western North Dakota, our first recapture from a site west of our station. The third recapture was banded last year by our friends at the Missouri River Bird Observatory (MRBO), at Marshall, Missouri, and was only one of thirteen banded there that season (Personal communication, Dana Ripper, director of MRBO).

November began with warm and mild weather much like October and we had just a trickle of diurnal raptor movement. By the 10th it had changed rapidly to winter weather more typical of January. Despite five attempts during the rest of November, no further diurnal banding occurred. The wintery weather had a similar effect on Saw-whet banding. The Saw-whet banding season peaks during the first week of November, and by the end of the third week, their migration is over (http://www.hawkcount.org/). During the period November 1-9, thirteen more Saw-whets were banded at Hitchcock Nature Center. We had planned to open another Saw-whet banding station on November 9th. Sandy Reinken was to continue banding owls at Hitchcock, while I intended to spend three nights banding Saw-whets at Waubonsie State Park, 50 miles south of Hitchcock in the Loess Hills. Our objective was to recapture Saw-whets banded at Hitchcock this season to demonstrate that the Loess Hills are used by the owls as a migration corridor. We were unable to carry out the plan due to the persistent unseasonably cold weather.

Table 1. Raptors Banded at Hitchcock Nature Center 2008-2014

Species	2014	2008-2014	Average
Diurnal Raptors			
Northern Harrier	0	1	0.1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	25	207	29.6
Cooper's Hawk	9	122	17.4
Northern Goshawk	0	2	0.3
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	2	0.3
Broad-winged Hawk	0	3	0.4
Swainson's Hawk	0	1	0.1
Red-tailed Hawk	82	643	91.9
American Kestrel	1	4	0.6
Merlin	0	8	1.1
Peregrine Falcon	0	7	1
Prairie Falcon	0	2	0.3
Nocturnal Raptors			
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	1	0.1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	38	306	51
TOTAL	**155**	**1309**	**194.3**

When the winter weather hit on the 10th, conditions were considered unsafe or unproductive for banding and no further banding occurred November 20th when the last Saw-whet of the season was banded. All told, 35 new owls were captured and banded, and 3 birds banded at other sites were also captured, totaling 38. (Table 1.) This tally is consistent with what might be expected the first year after the low year in the population recovery cycle (Rasmussen et al. 2008), especially considering losing two weeks of prime banding time to weather conditions.

In other nearby Saw-whet banding efforts, Veronica Mecko continued her efforts at Mount Ayr Wildlife Management Area in Ringgold County, Iowa, on four nights, which resulted in four Saw-whet captures. She also banded six Saw-whets in six nights at a second site, south of Lamoni, Iowa, on private property in Harrison County, just over border in Missouri. Her efforts were hampered by scheduling problems and by larger owls in close proximity to her mist nets, which forced her to close her nets prematurely or not open them at all on some nights due to fear of predation.

Acknowledgements

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First Documented Nest of Northern Saw-whet Owl in Nebraska

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Northern Saw-whet Owl was added to our avifauna with a list prepared by Taylor and Van Vleet (1889). The first suggestion of breeding was a second-hand report included in a paper presented at the first meeting of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union in 1899 by M.A. Carriker, Jr., who "...was told of a set of five eggs collected near Nebraska City about seven years ago..." (1900), but which included no other details. At the next meeting, Bruner (1901) cited that report to include the species on a list of birds that breed in the state. Bruner, Swenk and Walcott later referred to the report in their "A Preliminary Review of the Birds of Nebraska" (1904). The 1904 publication was the basis for breeding citations in the A.O.U. Checklist, Third Edition (1910) and Fourth Edition (1931), although it was dropped from subsequent AOU Checklists. It has also been cited by Bent (1938), as well as N.O.U. Checklists of 1945 (Haecker et al. 1945) and 1958 (Rapp et al. 1958) and by Sharpe et al. (2001).

Northern Saw-whet Owl chick, estimated 25-28 days old, in the Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co., 20 May 2014, photo by Wayne Mollhoff.

Through the years the species was suspected of breeding in Lincoln County (Tout 1947) and in the Pine Ridge of Sioux and Dawes counties (Rosche 1982, 1994). There were also occasional reports of calling birds in the Panhandle in April and May (Rosche 1994, Sharpe et al. 2001) but with no data on phenology for guidance, the possibility remained that these might represent migrants. Proof of breeding was presented by a road-killed, fledged young still in juvenal plumage found on 25 May 2002 in Antelope County and later preserved in the University of Nebraska State Museum (Silcock 2002). Later, archival field notes were discovered of a pair of adults with 3 young found at the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Cherry County, in 1978 (Mollhoff 2005). Later still a fledged young bird was photographed near Chadron State Park, Dawes County, on 5 July 2010 (Brogie 2011).

During the second Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas Project, 2006-2011, a project was instituted by Nebraska Prairie Partners, a joint partnership of Nebraska Game and Parks and the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, to study the species in western Nebraska. It was a well-designed one-year project to detect the species during the expected breeding season through calling survey routes located in areas of suitable habitat and was conducted in 2008 (Bly 2008, 2010). Through repeated responses at the same locations during the expected time frame of vocalizations, they were able to demonstrate the species' presence on territory in the Pine Ridge (Dawes and Sioux counties) and Wildcat Hills (Scotts Bluff and Banner counties), as well as in Kimball and Keith counties. Perhaps as importantly, they detected the species in suitable habitat at nearly all of the locations covered by their surveys across the entire area where they searched (Bly, personal communication). That finding suggested the possibility the species might be also be present in other areas of similar habitat outside the survey area.

Discussing their study, as well as a recent nest box study in South Dakota (Miller 2010) and wondering how to interpret other recent reports without having any detailed nest data in Nebraska for guidance, a friend suggested putting up some nest boxes in an attempt to get some local data. As a result I contacted land managers and biologists at Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the U.S. Forest Service for permission to conduct a study on their public access lands, laid out a route, decided where to place the boxes, and began building and placing 27 boxes in February 2012. The boxes were located in Johnson, Lincoln, Thomas, Cherry, Sheridan, Dawes, Sioux and Scotts Bluff counties.

Following rather disappointing seasons in 2012 and 2013, in which a total of 3 boxes were used by Eastern Screech-Owls, on 10 May 2014, I was surprised when I approached a box in the Wildcat Hills of Scotts Bluff County and found an adult Northern Saw-whet Owl peering down at me from the entrance hole. It flew to a nearby tree and watched while I checked the box.

Northern Saw-whet Owl chicks, estimated 15-18 days old, in the Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co., 20 May 2014, photo by Wayne Mollhoff.

I had checked that nest on 10 March 2014 and found the box vacant but with a deeply cupped depression in the sawdust that could indicate occupation. The next visit was in the dark the night of 17 April, when I found 5 warm eggs. With no bird in the box, I wrongly assumed they were Eastern Screech-Owl eggs, since they were the only owls to use any of the boxes so far in the study. When I returned on 10 May, I was surprised (and excited) to find a Northern Saw-whet Owl peering down at me as I approached the tree. I found four chicks and an un-hatched egg when I opened the box and guessed the age of the oldest to be 10-14 days. On 20 May I re-visited the site along with Nebraskaland Magazine regional editor, Justin Haag. The adult was not present and the oldest chick was peering at us from the box. After photographing each of the young and returning them to the box, the oldest flew from the box to a branch about 6 feet away on what seemed to be its first flight. After watching it from the ground for two hours, it showed no inclination to return to the box, so I climbed back up, caught it and put it back, where it stayed while we left. On 26 May I found 3 young still in the box but couldn't find either an adult or the apparently-fledged young in the area. On 28 May another observer photographed a fledged young nearby. On 7 October the vacated box was cleaned and the contents saved to study the food items.

PHENOLOGY

The stated incubation period is 26-28 days, and a fledge age of about a month (27-34 days) (Baicich and Harrison 1997). Working from the full clutch of five eggs found on 17 April and a chick apparently fledging no later than 28 May, I worked backward to estimate the following phenology: egg-laying by 2 April, hatching by 1 May, fledging by 28 May.

Photos showing feather development of the chicks were checked against descriptions and sketches in Pyle (1997) and Cannings (1993), as well as photos of known-age chicks in Bent (1938) to estimate the age of the chicks. Spread-wing photos of the young owls taken near and at fledging were compared to the spread-wing specimen of the juvenile salvaged on 25 May 2002 in Antelope County to compare feather development and wear. Feather development shown in the specimen and the photos are indistinguishable.

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

My thanks go to the following: Mark Brogie suggested the study and provided initial plans for nest boxes. Biologists Jeff Abegglen and Phil Dobesh of the U.S. Forest Service assisted with planning and making it a joint project, as did Bill Vodehnal as a co-employee of both the USFS and NGPC. NGPC supervisors Todd Nordeen, Greg Schenbeck, and Thomas Walker aided in coordinating with Wildlife Management Area managers Chris Becker, Lance Hastings and Mike Remund. Thanks also go to Thomas Labedz, collections manager at the University of Nebraska State Museum for making the 2002 specimen available for study.

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In Memory of Margaret Triplett

The NOU lost a longtime member in Kearney on August 7, 2014, when Margaret Sealing Triplett died.

Margaret spent her life in south central Nebraska. She graduated from Gibbon High School in 1939 and married Louie Triplett in 1942. She and Louie lived on a farm near Alda until they purchased their farm south of Gibbon in 1951, where they raised their five children. In addition to taking care of her home and family, volunteering at her church, and being active in the local extension club, Margaret was an active farmer's wife, working alongside her husband in the fields.

After Louie died in 1982, Margaret participated in Elderhostel programs, which took her around the United States. She was interested in reading and gardening, and she also enjoyed birding, both the birds and the company of birders.

Margaret will be remembered by the many friends she made among Nebraska birders, but even after those memories fade, she and her husband will be remembered as benefactors of Nebraska birding. She and Louie sold 160 acres along the Platte River to the Audubon Society in the early 1970s. Their willingness to part with 120 acres of accretion ground, of which 80 acres were open channel and 40 acres were wet meadow, helped to establish what is now known as Rowe Sanctuary. At one point, Louie was hired as a part-time warden and Margaret would type up his reports to send to Audubon. Their name lives on at Rowe Sanctuary in the trail through the grounds and along the river known as the Triplett Trail.

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